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WILLIAM DE B. B. B. B. B.

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S P E N S E R

AND

THE FAIRY QUEEN.

BY

JOHN S. <sup>SELL</sup>HART, LL.D.



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## P R E F A C E.

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THE present Essay is an attempt to reproduce, under modern forms, some of those agreeable ideas which instructed and entertained a former generation. Spenser was once regarded as one of the great store-houses of moral and intellectual truth. But the fashion of literature changes, and the Fairy Queen has now become not unlike a half-decayed and unfrequented Cathedral of the olden time. The object of the Essayist is to remove something of the repulsive gloom that has gathered around this venerable pile, to brush away a portion of the dust and cobwebs, and to throw once more the cheerful light of heaven upon its untold splendours—in short, to make this famous shrine, if possible, once more a favourite resort, not merely for the lovers of the antique and the curious, but for all the genuine votaries of truth and goodness. The aim is, in a word, and to drop the metaphor, not so much to advance opinions about this great work of art, as to show the work itself, to put the reader in possession of some of those glorious and ennobling ideas which the work contains. These ideas are here<sup>u</sup> presented partly in prose, in the language of the Essayist, and partly by extracts, in the language of the author,"with the spelling modernized so far as the rhythm and the rhyme of the verse would permit. The extracts are not introduced as mere isolated specimens, but are intimately mixed up with the tissue

of the argument, the whole being woven together into one connected and continuous story. By these means, the legendary exploits and scenes of Fairy Land are contemplated through a medium that brings their truths home to the "business and bosoms" of the men and women of the present day. The Essay, in other words, is, as already stated, an attempt to reproduce, rather than describe, the ideas of which it treats. It does not aspire to the dignity of a Critique. Its humbler office is to set forth some of the materials from which an intelligent judgment may be formed by the reader himself. To the devout lovers of Spenser, the method by which this has been attempted, may seem in some instances to savour of irreverent familiarity. They will, however, regard the offence with less severity, if they shall at the same time find in the work any evidence of its having been a labour of love, or any probability of its increasing the number of admirers and readers of the great original.

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L I F E

AND

MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS.



AN ESSAY  
ON  
THE LIFE AND WRITINGS  
OF  
EDMUND SPENSER.

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CHAPTER I.

Early Life—Education—Career in the University—Acquaintance with Gabriel Harvey—Two Years' Residence in the North of England—Love Affair—Return to London—Publication of the *Shepherds' Calendar*—Account of this Poem.

THIS gifted son of song was born in East Smithfield, London, in the year 1553. Of his family and his early life, almost nothing is known, and very little is even conjectured. There is an illustrious family of the name of Spencer in the interior of England, the Spencers of Northamptonshire. Our poet seems, in some of his poems, to lay claim to being connected with this ancient family—a claim which, to the honour of their good sense, they have never been disposed to question. “The nobility of the Spencers,” says Gibbon, “has been illustrated

and enriched by the trophies of Marlborough; but I exhort them to consider the Fairy Queen as the most precious jewel of their coronet." The precise connexion between this family and the author of the Fairy Queen, has not yet been ascertained, nor is it certainly known that any connexion at all existed.

Our author was evidently born in moderate circumstances. The proof of this is found in the fact that at College he was a *sizar*. This word is used at Cambridge to denote a class of students who are admitted to the privileges of the University on easier pecuniary terms than others, and in consideration, formerly at least, of performing certain offices of a menial character.

Spenser was admitted a sizar of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, in 1569, at the age of sixteen. Little is known of his academical career, except that at College he made the acquaintance of Gabriel Harvey, a man who exerted an important influence upon the poet's future course, and whose name will frequently occur in this essay. Harvey was a man of considerable learning, and possessed that sort of rough strong sense which so often enables its possessor to exert a controlling influence over another infinitely his superior in genius.

There has been a tradition that Spenser was an unsuccessful candidate for a fellowship in Pembroke Hall, his competitor being Lancelot Andrews, one of the men afterwards employed in making the English version of the Bible now in use. More careful investigations have shown this statement to be without foundation.

Spenser took his degree of A. B., in due course,

January, 1573, at the age of twenty; and his degree of A. M., in June, 1576, at the age of twenty-three. It is noticeable that, although Spenser in his writings repeatedly mentions the University with affectionate regard, he never, either in his letters or in his poetry, makes any mention of Pembroke Hall, the particular College to which he belonged. From this it has been inferred that he left it on not very good terms, though from what cause, or with whom, is, like the fact itself, entirely a matter of conjecture.

On leaving the University, Spenser went to some place in the north of England, where he resided about two years; where exactly, or with whom, or for what purpose, is not known. The general traditionary belief is, that it was a temporary residence with a branch of the Spencer family living in Lancashire, perhaps as a guest, not impossibly as a private tutor. The only things certain about this two years' sojourn in the "hill country" of England, are that the youthful poet fell in love with some lady whom he celebrates under the fictitious name of "Rosalind," and that on his return to London, at the end of the two years, he had ready for the press a volume of poetry, in the composition of which his love affair had doubtless been of no disadvantage to him.

Spenser is reputed to have been induced to return to London by the advice and solicitation of his friend Gabriel Harvey. This shrewd observer doubtless saw, in the precincts of the court, both a better prospect of his friend's promotion, and a more suitable sphere for the exercise of his talents, than in the limited range of rural and provincial life.

In 1579, the year of his return to London, Spenser

made his first publication, being a poem, or a series of poems, of the pastoral kind, written during his residence in the country. This poem is called *THE SHEPHERDS' CALENDAR*. It is in twelve books, or eclogues, according to the number of months in the year; viz.: eclogue first, for January; eclogue second, for February; eclogue third, for March; and so on to eclogue twelfth, for December. The subjects of these eclogues, and the illustrations, are drawn to some extent from the season indicated by the month. Each eclogue is a separate poem, not connected with the others, except that the same characters are found frequently recurring. By an eclogue is usually meant a poem representing real and generally cultivated and city people, under the garb of plain country people, particularly of shepherds. Such at least seems to have been Spenser's idea of it, and upon this idea he has modelled his poem. The shepherds, who bear the rustic names of Colin Clout, Cuddie, Thenot, Willie, Thomalin, Hobbinol, Palinode, Piers, &c., are described as attending to occupations suited to shepherds, cracking jokes, bantering each other about feats of skill upon the pipe, or singing the praises of their Phillises and Amaryllises. Most of the characters so described, represent, however, real persons, the intention of the poet being to clothe the feelings of refined and artificial life, in the simple and unsophisticated garb of rustic manners. Colin Clout is Spenser himself; Hobbinol represents Gabriel Harvey; and so of the others.

The *Shepherds' Calendar* was published, to a certain extent, anonymously, the author signing himself merely *IMMERITO*. It was necessary, therefore, to explain in



some manner the meaning of the allusions. For this purpose, it was introduced to the public with a prefatory epistle and annotations in various parts, explanatory of the views of the author, written by some intimate friend, who signs himself E. K. Who this E. K. was, has been a matter of no little speculation. He was evidently on terms of the greatest intimacy with the author; was fully acquainted with his views; and indeed speaks in such an authoritative way of the author's intentions and plans, as to give some little weight certainly to the conjecture of one of the most judicious of the poet's biographers. This conjecture does not indeed seem to have met with general favour. Still it is far from being an impossible supposition. At all events, if there is some hardihood in asserting, there is some also in denying, that this unknown annotator, E. K., is none other than Spenser himself. An objection to such a supposition may be found in the terms of praise with which E. K. sometimes speaks of the new poet. But Spenser had no mean opinion of his own abilities, and modern literature at least could furnish more questionable examples of authors' devices to make known their merits as well as their meaning.

The diction in the *Shepherds' Calendar*, is evidently more ancient than that which was current in the days of Queen Elizabeth. Indeed, the author, or his friend E. K., admits the fact, and attempts to defend it. Spenser in all his poetry has something of this quality, but in none so much as in his first publication. In maintaining and acting upon this theory, Spenser forgot the law of progress inseparable from language. Under the influence of this law, Chaucer had become

in a great measure a sealed book, even in the days of Elizabeth, just as the language that prevailed in common life in the time of Elizabeth, has become partially antiquated now. Consequently, language which even then was intentionally antedated, has now become to a considerable extent unintelligible to the ordinary reader. Spenser, indeed, never abandoned the idea that some poetical beauty is to be gathered from the use of words slightly off the popular lip, as we find the diction of all his poems rather older than that of his contemporaries. Still, after the publication of the *Calendar*, he seems to have modified his views a little, and to have used in his subsequent poems language not quite so far behind the times.

In the *Shepherds' Calendar*, there is a great variety of versification, both in regard to the stanza and the metre. There is too, what I do not recollect to have seen noticed by any of the critics, very frequent and decisive evidence of an attempt to recur to the old Saxon poetical alliteration in connexion with rhyme. The whole poem indeed seems to be of a *tentative* character, the author trying at the same time both his own powers and the temper of the public. Among all the varieties of versification introduced into the *Calendar*, it is noticeable, that he has not once used the immortal stanza that bears his name.

To give the reader some more definite idea of this poem, the first eclogue is quoted entire. This particular eclogue is selected because it is the shortest, and the least antiquated, and consequently most readable; and also, because it brings clearly to view his love affair, which had much to do with his subsequent history.

## JANUARY.

## AEGLOGA PRIMA.

ARGUMENT.—In this first Eclogue, Colin Clout, a Shepherd's Boy, complaineth himself of his unfortunate love, being but newly (as seemeth) enamoured of a Country Lass called Rosalind : with which strong affection being very sore travailed, he compareth his careful case to the sad season of the year, to the frosty ground, to the frozen trees, and to his own winter-beaten flock. And lastly, finding himself robbed of all former pleasance and delight, he breaketh his Pipe in pieces, and casteth himself to the ground.

## COLIN CLOUT.

A Shepherd's Boy, (no better do him call),  
 When winter's wasteful spite was almost spent,  
 All in a sunshine day, as did befall,  
 Led forth his flock, that had been long ypent :  
     So faint they waxed, and feeble in the fold,  
     That now uneath\* their feet could them uphold.

All as the sheep, such was the shepherd's look,  
 For pale and wan he was, (alas the while !)  
 May seem he loved, or else some care he took ;  
 Well could he tune his pipe and frame his style ;  
     Then to a hill his fainting flock he led,  
     And thus him plained, the while his sheep there fed :

“ Ye gods of love ! that pity lovers' pain,  
 (If any gods the pain of lovers pity,)  
 Look from above, where you in joys remain,  
 And bow your ears unto my doleful ditty.  
     And, Pan ! thou shepherds' god, that once didst love,  
     Pity the pains that thou thyself didst prove.

---

\* *Uneath*, (un-easily,) not easily, scarcely.

“Thou barren ground, whom winter’s wrath hath wasted,  
Art made a mirror to behold my plight;  
Whilom thy fresh spring flowered, and after hasted  
Thy summer proud, with daffodillies dight;  
And now is come thy winter’s stormy stake,  
Thy mantle marred wherein thou maskedst late.

“Such rage as winter’s reigneth in my heart,  
My life-blood freezing with unkindly cold;  
Such stormy stours\* do breed my baleful smart,  
As if my year were waste and waxen old;  
And yet, alas! but now my spring begun,  
And yet, alas! it is already done.

“You naked trees, whose shady leaves are lost,  
Wherein the birds were wont to build their bower,  
And now are clothed with moss and hoary frost,  
Instead of blossoms, wherewith your buds did flower;  
I see your tears that from your boughs do rain,  
Whose drops in dreary icicles remain.

“All so my lustful leaf is dry and sere,  
My timely buds with wailing all are wasted;  
The blossom which my branch of youth did bear,  
With breathéd sighs is blown away and blasted;  
And from mine eyes the drizzling tears descend,  
As on your boughs the icicles depend.

“Thou feeble flock! whose fleece is rough and rent,  
Whose knees are weak through fast and evil fare,  
Mayst witness well, by thy ill government,  
Thy master’s mind is overcome with care:  
Thou weak, I wan; thou lean, I quite forlorn:  
With mourning pine I; you with pining mourn.

---

\* *Stours*, fits.

“A thousand sithes\* I curse that careful hour  
Wherein I longed the neighbour town to see,  
And eke ten thousand sithes I bless the stour†  
Wherein I saw so fair a sight as she:

Yet all for nought; such sight hath bred my bane.

Ah, God! that love should breed both joy and pain!

“It is not Hobbinol wherefore I plain,  
Albe’ my love he seek with daily suit;  
His clownish gifts and curtsies I disdain,  
His kids, his cracknels, and his early fruit.

Ah, foolish Hobbinol! thy gifts be vain;

Colin them gives to Rosalind again.

“I love thilk‡ lass, (alas! why do I love?)  
And am forlorn, (alas! why am I lorn?)  
She deigns not my good will, but doth reprove,  
And of my rural music holdeth scorn.

Shepherd’s devise she hateth as the snake,

And laughs the songs that Colin Clout doth make.

“Wherefore, my Pipe, albe’ rude Pan thou please,  
Yet for‡ thou pleasest not where most I would;  
And thou, unlucky Muse, that wont’st to ease  
My musing mind, yet canst not when thou should;  
Both Pipe and Muse shall sore the while abyë.”  
So broke his oaten pipe, and down did lie.

By that the welkéd|| Phœbus gan avale¶  
His weary wain; and now the frosty Night  
Her mantle black through heaven ’gan overhale:\*\*  
Which seen, the pensive Boy, half in despite,  
Arose, and homeward drove his sunned sheep,  
Whose hanging heads did seem his careful case to weep.

---

\* *Sithes*, times.      † *Stour*, (lit. stir) fit, attack, occasion.      ‡ *Thilk*, this.  
‡ *For*, because.      || *Welked*, (lit., revolved) decreased, setting.      ¶ *Avale*, (ad  
vallis) to fall, and to cause to fall, *i. e.* to lower.      \*\* *Overhale*, (overhaul)  
draw over



The affair of Rosalind was not a mere poetical fiction—something imagined, in order to give point to his verses,—but a real and painful history, which affected the author seriously and for many years. From the manner in which Spenser alludes to the subject in different parts of his works, I judge that Rosalind was a woman of high consideration for her personal qualities, and at the same time of high birth; and that she rejected his suit on account of the difference between them in the latter respect. Spenser never speaks of her in terms of reproach, but on the contrary, even after he was in the height of his reputation, reproaches himself for presumption in aspiring so high. The attention of the curious has been not a little awakened to ascertain who she was. The only clue to the subject, is that given by E. K., who propounds in regard to it the following enigma :

Rosalind is a feigned name, which being well ordered, will bewray the very name of his love and mistress, whom by that name he coloureth.

Leaving the solution of this grave question to those more interested, or more skilled, in such matters, I proceed with the narrative.

Spenser, it is clear, had not yet found his place, when he wrote the Calendar. Nature had designed him for something different. Pastoral poetry is, in its very nature, simple and unaffected. Spenser's genius was one suited rather to the description of stately splendours, abounding indeed almost beyond parallel in the power of magnificent adornment. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that in his *Shepherds'*



Calendar, he has fallen far behind the exquisite models which he had professedly in his eye. At the same time, this poem is, in my opinion, of a much higher order of merit than some of the critics have been disposed to assign to it. It is probably less regarded than it would have been, had not the author afterwards so immeasurably outstripped himself by his own Fairy Queen.

## CHAPTER II.

Connexion with Sidney—Leicester House—Proposed Visit to the Continent—Correspondence with Harvey—The New Versification—Lost Poems—The Dying Pelican—The Dreams—The Stemmata Dudleiana—The Nine English Comedies—The English Poet—Minor Poems—The Fairy Queen commenced—Harvey's Opinion of it—Evidences of Industry—Grants of Land in Ireland—Kilcolman Castle—Raleigh's Visit—Publication of the First Three Books of the Fairy Queen.

SOMEWHERE about the year 1579, the gallant and accomplished Sir Philip Sidney was seated in one of the halls of his uncle, the powerful Earl of Leicester. A modest stranger presented himself at the portal, and without announcing his name, sent in by the servant a parcel to Sir Philip, containing the manuscript of an unpublished poem. Sir Philip commenced reading the manuscript, and immediately discovered in it marks of genius of the highest order. After reading a few stanzas, he turned to his steward and bade him give the person that brought those verses fifty pounds, but upon reading the next stanza, he ordered the sum to be doubled. The steward, surprised at the strange conduct of his master, thought it his duty to make some delay in executing so sudden and lavish a bounty; but upon reading one stanza more, Sir Philip raised his gratuity to two hundred pounds, and commanded the steward to give it immediately, lest as he read farther, he might be tempted to give away his whole estate. The poem was the *Fairy Queen*, the modest stranger was Edmund Spenser.

Such is the romantic origin of the friendship between Sidney and Spenser, as handed down to us by the earlier biographers. It seems a pity to disturb a story so agreeable. But as, it is presumed, the reader desires to be instructed rather than amused, it is necessary, however ungracious, to add that on careful investigation the whole story is found to be without adequate foundation. Spenser was indebted, for his introduction to Leicester House, to instrumentality of a much more every-day character, having made the acquaintance of Sir Philip simply through the kindness of a common friend, Gabriel Harvey. Under the influence, however, of warm hearts and kindred tastes, acquaintance soon ripened into friendship, and friendship into intimacy;—and few months elapsed after the first interview, before the young poet was at home in the hospitable mansion of the most powerful earl in England.

No nobleman in England enjoyed at that time greater personal favour with Queen Elizabeth than the Earl of Leicester; and no man in England probably combined in a higher degree the qualities of a gallant soldier and an elegant scholar, than his accomplished nephew, Sir Philip Sidney. It was under the auspices of these friends, that Spenser first came into public notice; and all the patronage that at any time he received from the government, emanated from the same source.

Spenser's acquaintance with Sidney and Leicester commenced probably before the publication of the *Shepherds' Calendar*. This is inferred partly from the dedication of the poem to Sir Philip, and partly from the terms of intimacy which we find to exist

so soon after the publication. The *Shepherds' Calendar* is dated April 10th, 1579. In the latter part of the same year, Spenser seems to have been on the point of going on some confidential mission abroad, for the Earl of Leicester. This is alluded to in several letters, and among others in one to Harvey, dated October 16th, 1579, at Leicester House: "I was minded," says Spenser, "to have sent you some English verses, or rhymes, for a farewell; but by my troth, I have no spare time in the world to think on such toys, that you know will demand a freer head than mine is presently. I beseech you by all your courtesies and graces, let me be answered ere I go; which will be (I hope, I fear, I think) the next week, if I can be despatched of my Lord. I go thither, as sent by him, and maintained most-what of him; and there am to employ my time, my body, my mind to his honour's service. Thus, with many super-hearty commendations and recommendations, to yourself and all my friends with you, I end my last farewell, not thinking any more to write to you before I go." In some Latin hexameters enclosed in the same letter, he speaks of himself as "*mox in Gallias navigaturi*"—about to sail into France—and intimates the possibility of his travelling farther south and east, not only beyond the Alps, but even beyond the Caucasus. This mission or journey was probably never performed, as we find him in April, 1580, a little more than five months later, still in London.

In the same year, 1580, a correspondence was published between him and Harvey, consisting of five letters, three from Harvey, and two from Spenser, relating chiefly to a new theory of English versifica-

tion. Sidney, Harvey, Dyer, and Spenser (the last apparently against his own opinions and in deference to the opinions of his friends), formed a project for entirely remodelling English poetry. The plan was to banish rhyme and accentual rhythm, and restore the longs and shorts of Latin prosody. The following is a specimen of the new fashion.

Unhappy verse, the witness of my unhappy state,  
Make thyself fluttering wings of thy fast flying  
Thought, and fly forth unto my love wheresoever she be :

Whether lying restless in heavy bed, or else  
Sitting so cheerless at the cheerful board, or else  
Playing alone careless on her heavenly virginals.

If in bed ; tell her that my eyes can take no rest ;  
If at board ; tell her that my mouth can eat no meat ;  
If at her virginals ; tell her I can bear no mirth.

Asked why ? Say, waking love suffereth no sleep ;  
Say, that raging love doth appal the weak stomach ;  
Say, that lamenting love marreth the musical.

Tell her, that her pleasures were wont to lull me asleep ;  
Tell her, that her beauty was wont to feed mine eyes ;  
Tell her, that her sweet tongue was wont to make me mirth.

Now do I nightly waste, wanting my kindly rest ;  
Now do I daily starve, wanting my lively food ;  
Now do I always die, wanting my timely mirth.

And if I waste, who will bewail my heavy chance ?  
And if I starve, who will record my cursed end ?  
And if I die, who will say, this was IMMERITO ?

If Spenser was out of place in pastoral poetry, he was still farther from home in such ingenious trifling



as this. It was like using the wand of Aladdin, not to call up a scene of enchantment, but to mark off a chequer-board, or to measure tape!

From the correspondence between Harvey and Spenser, relative to this subject, and from the annotations of E. K. in the *Shepherds' Calendar*, we gather much incidental information respecting Spenser's other literary labours. Among the pieces thus incidentally mentioned, are several not found in any printed copy of his works. From the titles of these and the account given of them, they do not seem to form a part of any of his other poems. The presumption is that they are lost. I will enumerate them in order.

The first work thus mentioned is *THE DYING PELICAN*. Nothing is known of this poem except its name, and the fact that in April, 1580, it was finished and ready for the press. No poem of Spenser's is now extant under this name, and no part of any of his poems under other names, contains anything relating to this subject. Nothing definite is known of its size. Spenser however speaks of it, not as a mere fugitive piece, but as a work of some considerable size and importance.

In the same letter to Harvey, April 10, 1580, Spenser mentions another poem as being finished. He calls it *THE DREAMS*, and says it is accompanied with annotations by E. K.; and he expresses the wish that it may be published by itself, in a separate volume, being about the size of the *Shepherds' Calendar*. "I take best," says he, "my Dreams should come forth alone, being grown by means of the gloss [annotations] (running continually in manner of a paraphrase) full



as great as my Calendar. Therein [in the annotations], be some things excellently, and many things wittily, discoursed of [by] E. K., and the pictures so singularly set forth and portrayed, as if Michael Angelo were there, he could, I think, neither amend the best nor reprehend the worst. I know you will like them passing well." And E. K. himself, in his annotation upon eclogue eleventh of the Shepherds' Calendar, speaking of nectar and ambrosia, adds, "but I have already discoursed [of] that at large in my Commentary upon the Dreams of the same author." Harvey also in reply, and speaking evidently of contracts with publishers, rallies Spenser about his "living by Dying Pelicans, and purchasing great lands and lordships with the money which his Calendar and Dreams have [afforded] and will afford him." From all this, it is manifest, that the "Dreams" was a poem of considerable size. Nothing under this name, or like it under another name, appears in his works. It is presumed to be lost.

Another work mentioned in this correspondence, is the STEMMATA DUDLEIANA. This was a work in Latin (whether in prose or verse, it does not appear), celebrating the ancestry and virtues of his noble patron, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Spenser's language in regard to this composition, is as follows: "Of my Stemmata Dudleiana, and especially of the sundry apostrophes therein, addressed you know to whom, must more advisement be had than so lightly to send them abroad: howbeit trust me (though I do never very well), yet, in my own fancy, *I never did better.*" This work is now lost. Nothing at all is

known of its size, nor is anything known of its merits, except Spenser's own opinion just quoted.

From the same correspondence between Harvey and Spenser, we learn that the latter had written *NINE ENGLISH COMEDIES*, and that they had been submitted in manuscript to Harvey for his opinion. Harvey speaks of them as being nearly, if not quite, equal to the Comedies of Ariosto. As Spenser had intimated that both the *Stemmata* and the Comedies were not yet ready to see the light, needing some farther revision, which he could not give them until the completion of another work presently to be mentioned, Harvey thereupon expresses great impatience at the interruption. "Commend me," says he, "to thine own good self, and tell thy Dying Pelican, and thy Dreams from me, I will now leave dreaming any longer of them till with these eyes I see them forth indeed." He then goes on to say, "I suppose this new poem," (presently to be mentioned), "will hold us as long in suspense for your Nine English Comedies, and your Latin *Stemmata Dudleiana*; which two shall go for my money, when all is done, especially if you would but bestow one seven-night's polishing and trimming upon either; which I pray thee do, for my pleasure, if not for their sake or thine own profit." Harvey farther adds, "You know it hath been the usual practice of the most exquisite and odd [remarkable] wits in all nations, and especially in Italy, rather to show and advance themselves that way, [by writing comedies,] than in any other; as, namely, those three discoursing heads, Bibiena, Machiavel, and Aretino did, (to let Bembo and Ariosto pass,) with the great admiration and wonderment of the whole country;

being indeed reputed matchable in all points, both for conceit of wit, and eloquent deciphering of matters, either with Aristophanes and Menander in Greek, or with Plautus and Terence in Latin, or with any other in any other tongue." Now, the Latin, Greek, and Italian works here referred to, were comedies in the strict sense of the term. It is manifest, therefore, that the compositions of Spenser under consideration, were not like his other poems in form, but were, as their name imports, really dramatic performances. It is hardly necessary to add, these Nine Comedies are lost.

The unknown commentator E. K., in the argument to the tenth eclogue of the *Shepherds' Calendar*, remarks, that this eclogue treats, among other things, of the high esteem in which poetry has been held among all nations; "As," says he, "the author hereof [of this book] elsewhere at large discourseth in his book called *THE ENGLISH POET*, which book being lately come to my hands, I mind also by God's grace upon further advertisement to publish." It would have been a matter of no small interest to see what so illustrious a poet had to say of his own art. But this work also is among the lost.

There are several other poems mentioned by E. K., which, there is good reason to believe, were either fugitive pieces, or they have been embodied under different names in his other poems. I will therefore not dwell upon them, but merely record their titles, as given by E. K. They are, *LEGENDS*, *COURT OF CUPID*, *TRANSLATION OF MOSCHUS'S IDYLLION OF WANDERING LOVE*, *PAGEANTS*, and *EPITHALAMION THAMESIS*.

This correspondence reveals to us another important fact. Harvey, it will be recollected, expresses great impatience, because the completion of the Nine Comedies is delayed in consequence of another work presently to be named. That work, which was then in the hands of Harvey for his judgment, and which he evidently regarded as inferior both to the Nine English Comedies and the *Stemmata Dudleiana*, was none other than *THE FAIRY QUEEN*. The first notice of this great poem is in Spenser's letter of April 10th, 1580, so often quoted. It is in these words. "Now," writes Spenser, "my Dreams and Dying Pelican being fully finished (as I partly signified in my last letters), and presently to be imprinted, I will in hand forthwith with my Fairy Queen, which I pray you send me with all expedition; and your friendly letters and long-expected judgment withal, which let not be short, but in all points such as you ordinarily use, and I extraordinarily desire." To this Harvey replies: "In good faith, I had once again nigh forgotten your Fairy Queen: howbeit, by good chance I have now sent her home at the last, neither in better nor worse case than I found her. And must you of necessity have my judgment of her indeed?—To be plain, I am void of all judgment, if your Nine Comedies . . . . . come not nearer Ariosto's Comedies, either for the fineness of plausible elocution, or the rareness of poetical invention, than that *ELVISH QUEEN* doth to his Orlando Furioso; which, notwithstanding, you will needs seem to emulate and hope to overgo, as you flatly professed yourself in one of your last letters." Harvey next remarks, parenthetically, that Spenser had given to these Comedies the names of the Nine Muses, after











*Kilmolman Castle.*



clerk to the Irish Court of Chancery, and during the same year he received from the Queen the grant of a lease of the Abbey of Enniscorthy, and the attached castle and manor, in the county of Wexford, in Ireland. The sale of this lease is supposed to have been the source of considerable emolument to him.

Lord Grey, to whom Spenser was secretary, remained in Ireland exactly two years. His lordship returned to England in August, 1582. Spenser is supposed to have returned with him, but of this there is no positive evidence. For the next four years we know little of him. In June, 1586, he obtained from the crown the grant of three thousand acres of land in the county of Cork, in Ireland, being part of the forfeited estates of the Earl of Desmond. For this grant, it is supposed, Spenser was indebted to the influence of his friend and patron, Sir Philip Sidney. The fact, if so, has an interest of a peculiar kind, as it was probably his last act of friendship to the poet. The illustrious author of the *Arcadia* died in October of that same year, of wounds received in the memorable battle of Zutphen.

Spenser, by the terms of his grant, was obliged to live on the estate. His residence was one not unsuited to the purposes of poetry. He occupied for his own habitation Kilcolman Castle, one of the ancient strongholds of the Earls of Desmond. This venerable structure stood in the midst of a large plain, by the side of a lake. The river Mulla ran through his grounds, and a chain of mountains skirted the horizon in the distance. For four years, from 1586 to 1590, we may imagine him retired to this romantic spot, and slowly and patiently maturing his immortal work.

During the last of these years, an event occurred of no small moment to the solitary student. This was the visit paid to him by that distinguished scholar and soldier, Sir Walter Raleigh. Raleigh would seem to have been thrown into the poet's neighbourhood for the very purpose of supplying the loss of his friend Sidney. Sir Walter had obtained from the crown, for his military services in Ireland, twelve thousand acres from the estate already mentioned, the forfeited lands of the Earl of Desmond. In what manner, or when, the acquaintance between Spenser and Raleigh commenced, it is difficult to say. The first account we have of their meeting, is at Kilcolman Castle, where in 1589 Raleigh came to visit his neighbour, the poet.

It was now ten years since the *Fairy Queen*, in some shape, or at least some part of it, had been submitted to Gabriël Harvey for his opinion. What changes or additions the author made during these ten years, whether or not the whole poem was recast, we have no means of determining. All we know is, that the same poem, now more nearly complete, was, at the visit just referred to, submitted to Sir Walter Raleigh for his examination and opinion.

Raleigh was quite as much a man of letters as a soldier. He was ardent and imaginative, and had by nature a strong tinge of romance. He had seen strange lands and wild adventures. But nothing, it may well be believed, had yet occurred in the discursive ranges either of his thoughts or of his life, so to fire his imagination—so to satisfy and fill his sense of the beautiful, as when, on this interesting occasion, the two illustrious friends, beneath



“The coolly shade  
Of the green alders, by the Mulla’s shore,”

read together the enchanting scenes of the Fairy Queen.

The opinion of Raleigh as to the merits of the poem, it may readily be supposed, did not coincide with that of Harvey. The poem was not indeed complete. It had, in its plan, a fault in common with the Canterbury Tales, that namely, of being entirely too gigantic in its dimensions. The plan of the Fairy Queen contemplated twelve books. Only three of these were now completed. Still, such was the high opinion Raleigh conceived of the merits of the work, that he urged and induced the author to publish immediately the books already finished.

The two friends accordingly soon after proceeded to London for this purpose; and under date of December 1st, 1589, in the register of the Stationers’ Company, is found the following brief entry:

The Faery Queene,  
Disposed into xii Books.

The publication of course took place soon after, that is, early in 1590. It was a small quarto volume, in large type, with the following title page: “The Faerie Queene. Disposed into xii Books, fashioning xii Moral Vertues. London. Printed for William Ponsonbie.”

The reception of the Fairy Queen, or rather of the three books published in 1590, was enthusiastic. It could hardly be otherwise, considering either the intrinsic merits of the poem, or its eminent adaptedness

to the stately solemnities of the age and court of Elizabeth. Among other tokens of regard, Spenser received from the Queen the substantial one of an annual pension of fifty pounds sterling for life.

} In the present essay, the minor poems of Spenser are noticed in connexion with the events of his life, at the times when they were severally published. But the *Fairy Queen*, beyond the mere history of its publication already given, is reserved for separate and special consideration. The exposition of the plan of this great poem, constitutes indeed the principal part of the present volume. This exposition will be commenced immediately after bringing to a close the notice of his life and his other writings.



### CHAPTER III.

Spenser's Return to Ireland—Publication of Miscellaneous Poems—The Ruins of Time—The Tears of the Muses—Virgil's Gnat—Mother Hubbard's Tale—The Ruins of Rome—Visions of Bellay, Petrarch, and Spenser—Muiopotmos, or The Fate of the Butterfly.

ON completing the publication of the first three books of the *Fairy Queen*, Spenser returned to Ireland. The immediate fame, however, which he had acquired by that publication, caused everything from the same source to be in demand. Hence his publisher, in the following year, in the absence of the author, collected and printed in one volume several minor pieces which had been distributed in manuscript among the poet's friends. This volume, Spenser's third publication, is next to be noticed.

The account which the publisher gives of it, is as follows: "Since my late setting forth of the *Fairy Queen*, finding that it hath found a favourable passage amongst you; I have . . . endeavoured, by all good means, . . . to get into my hands such small poems of the same author's as I heard were dispersed abroad in sundry hands, and not easy to be come by, by himself; some of them having been diversely embezzled and purloined from him, since his departure over sea. Of the which I have, by good means, gathered together these few parcels present, which I have caused to be imprinted all together, for that they all contain like matter of argument in them, being all Complaints and

meditations of the world's vanity, very grave and profitable." The collection was printed in quarto form, dated 1591. Its general title was in these words: "COMPLAINTS, containing sundry small Poems of the world's vanity; by Ed. Sp." This title originated with the publisher, and was given for the reason contained in the paragraph just quoted. The poems, however, are never quoted by this general title, but by the separate title given by the author to each separate piece. By these titles, therefore, they will now be severally described.

THE RUINS OF TIME. The first poem in this collection is entitled *The Ruins of Time*. It is dated 1591; and is dedicated to the "Right noble and beautiful Lady, the Lady Mary, Countess of Pembroke."

This noble lady was a person of high literary accomplishments, and the sister of his lamented friend Sidney. Both Sidney and Leicester were now dead, and Spenser had been for some years removed from the circle of those friends who had been his early and steadfast supporters. One object at least of the poem under consideration, was to testify his gratitude to this illustrious house for past favours. He seems to have been moved to the undertaking by an insinuation that he had forgotten his former friends. The tribute of affection which he brings is not the less agreeable from the fact, that, at the time it was offered, his own star was in the ascendant, while that of his patrons was under a temporary cloud.

In proceeding to form some idea of the character of this poem, the reader is requested to bear in mind, that on the banks of the Thames, near the present

city of St. Albans, were to be seen, in the time of Elizabeth, some crumbled walls and mounds, supposed to indicate the site of the ancient Roman town, Verolamium, Verulam, or Verlam. Imagine yourself then, gentle reader, straying with the poet along these mounds, while you read the following stanzas :

It chancéd me one day beside the shore  
Of silver-streaming Thamesis to be,  
Nigh where the goodly Verlam stood of yore,  
Of which there now remains no memory,  
Nor any little monument to see,  
By which the traveller, that fares that way,  
“*This once was she*,” may warnéd be to say.

There, on the other side, I did behold  
A WOMAN sitting sorrowfully wailing,  
Rending her yellow locks, like wiry gold,  
About her shoulders carelessly down trailing,  
And streams of tears from her fair eyes forth railing :\*  
In her right hand a broken rod she held,  
Which towards heaven she seemed on high to weld.†

Perceiving something supernatural in the appearance of this female, and curious to know both who she was, and what was the cause of her unusual distress, the poet addresses her.

Much was I movéd at her piteous plaint,  
And felt my heart nigh riven in my breast,  
With tender ruth to see her sore constraint ;  
That, shedding tears a while, I still did rest,  
And after, did her *name* of her request.  
“Name have I none (quoth she) nor any being,  
Bereft of both by Fate’s unjust decreeing.

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\* *Railing*, running.† *Weld*, wield, hold up.

“I *was* that city, which the garland wore  
Of Britain’s pride, delivered unto me  
By Roman victors, which it won of yore ;  
Though nought at all but ruins now I be,  
And lie in mine own ashes, as ye see :  
VERLAM I was ;—what boots it that I was,  
Since now I am but weeds and wasteful grass

“O vain world’s glory, and unsteadfast state,  
Of all that lives on face of sinful earth !  
Which, from their first until their utmost date,  
Taste no one hour of happiness or mirth ;  
But like as, at the ingate\* of their birth,  
They crying creep out of their mother’s womb,  
So, wailing back, go to their woful tomb.”

This woman, the Genius of the ruined town, goes on in this tuneful but melancholy strain, through more than four hundred lines, to lament the *Ruins wrought by Time*. She passes briefly in review the ancient empires—Assyrian, Persian, Grecian, Roman—and then dwells with a heavy heart upon her own sorrowful fortunes.

“To tell the beauty of my buildings fair,  
Adorned with purest gold and precious stone,  
To tell my riches and endowments rare,  
That by my foes are now all spent and gone ;  
To tell my forces, matchable to none ;—  
Were but lost labour, that few would believe,  
And, with rehearsing, would me more aggrieve.

“High towers, fair temples, goodly theatres,  
Strong walls, rich porches, princely palaces,  
Large streets, brave houses, sacred sepulchres,  
Sure gates, sweet gardens, stately galleries,  
Wrought with fair pillars, and fine imageries ;

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\* *Ingate*, entrance.



All those (O pity) now are turned to dust,  
And overgrown with black oblivion's rust.

The melancholy Genius continues in this way the sad recital of her woes, until the old grassy mound becomes to the reader a scene of the tenderest interest, when by a beautiful transition she passes to the real object of the whole poem.

“But why (unhappy wight) do I thus cry,  
And grieve that my remembrance quite is razed  
Out of the knowledge of posterity,  
And all my antique monuments defaced?  
Since I do daily see things highest placed,  
So soon as Fates their vital thread have shorn,  
Forgotten quite as they were never born.

“It is not long, since these two eyes beheld  
A mighty PRINCE, of most renownéd race,  
Whom England high in count of honour held,  
And greatest ones did sue to gain his grace;  
Of greatest ones he, greatest in his place,  
Sat in the bosom of his sovérain,\*  
And *Right and Loyal* did his word maintain.

I saw *him* die, I saw him die as one  
Of the mean people, and brought forth on bier;  
I saw him die, and no man left to moan  
His doleful fate, that late him lovéd dear:  
Scarce any left to close his eyelids near;  
Scarce any left upon his lips to lay  
“The sacred sod, or Requiem to say.”

It is hardly necessary to remark that the noble prince, whom the sorrowful lady thus celebrates, was Spenser's patron, the Earl of Leicester. She goes on:

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\* *Sovérain*, pronounced as a triayllable, sov-e-rain.

“He now is dead, and all his glory gone,  
 And all his greatness vapouréd to nought,  
 That as a glass upon the water shone,  
 Which vanished quite, so soon as it was sought:  
 His name is worn already out of thought,  
 Ne any poet seeks him to revive;  
 Yet many poets honoured him alive.

“Ne doth his Colin, careless Colin Clout,  
 Care now his idle bagpipe up to raise,  
 Ne tell his sorrow to the listening rout  
 Of shepherd grooms, which wont his songs to praise:  
 Praise who so list, yet I will him dispraise,  
 Until he quit him of this guilty blame:  
 Wake, Shepherd Boy! at length awake for shame.”

Having thus called upon Colin and the other shepherds to join in lamenting their common benefactor, she proceeds with her lamentations:

He died, and after him his brother died,  
 His brother Prince, his brother noble peer.

And thus the woful lady goes on to celebrate in succession, the virtues and princely deeds of different members of this distinguished family, dwelling of course with the tenderest affection upon SIDNEY.

“Most gentle spirit, breathéd from above  
 Out of the bosom of the Maker’s bliss,  
 In whom all bounty and all virtuous love  
 Appeared in their native properties,  
 And did enrich that noble breast of his  
 With treasure passing all this worldés\* worth,  
 Worthy of heaven itself, which brought it forth.

“His happy spirit, full of power divine  
 And influence of all celestial grace,

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\* *Worldés*, to be pronounced as a dissyllable. It is the old form of the possessive, for *world’s*.



Loathing this sinful earth and earthly slime,  
Fled back too soon unto his native place ;  
Too soon for all that did his love embrace,  
Too soon for all this wretched world, whom he  
Robbed of all right and true nobility.

“O noble spirit ! live there, ever blessed,  
The world’s late wonder and the heaven’s new joy ;  
Live ever there, and leave me here distressed  
With mortal cares and cumbrous world’s annoy !  
But, where thou dost that happiness enjoy,  
Bid me, O bid me quickly come to thee,  
That happy there I may thee always see !

“Yet, whilst the Fates afford me vital breath,  
I will it spend in speaking of thy praise,  
And sing to thee, until that timely death  
By heaven’s doom do end my earthly days :  
Thereto do thou my humble spirit raise,  
And into me that sacred breath inspire,  
Which thou there breathest perfect and entire.”

The woful lady hopes that the verses which she has made to celebrate the different members of this illustrious house, may not be consigned to oblivion. The Muse alone has power to confer immortality either upon men or their works. And so it is. Leicester, Sidney, and their compeers, must for ever share the immortality of this beautiful poem ; and thus they will not be, as they otherwise might have been, among the Ruins of Time.

At the last, the sorrowful lady disappears, and the poet falls into a reverie. Under the influence of the subjects which have been presented to his excited imagination, twelve VISIONS, or phantasms, rise before him in rapid succession and as rapidly disappear. Each vision is described in a stanza or sonnet, and

presents in itself a complete picture. The first six visions are various scenes representing the instability of earthly happiness ; the other six are as many scenes representing the enduring nature of that happiness which is linked with the skies. One of each will be sufficient to give the reader an idea of the whole.

Then did I see a pleasant PARADISE,  
Full of sweet flowers and daintiest delights,  
Such as on earth man could not more devise,  
With pleasures choice to feed his cheerful sprites :  
Not that which Merlin by his magic sleights  
Made for the gentle Squire, to entertain  
His fair Belpheobe, could this garden stain.  
But, oh, short pleasure bought with lasting pain !  
Why will hereafter any flesh delight  
In earthly bliss, and joy in pleasures vain,  
Since that I saw this garden wasted quite,  
That where it was, scarce seeméd any sight ?  
That I, which once that beauty did behold,  
Could not from tears my melting eyes withhold.

Now for a vision of the other kind.

Upon that famous river's farther shore,  
There stood a snowy SWAN of heavenly hue,  
And gentle kind, as ever fowl afore ;  
A fairer one in all the goodly crew,  
Of white Strimonian brood might no man view :  
There he most sweetly sang the prophecy  
Of his own death in doleful elegy.  
At last, when all his mourning melody  
He ended had, that both the shores resounded,  
Feeling the fit that him forewarned to die,  
With lofty flight above the earth he bounded,  
And out of sight to highest heaven mounted,  
Where now he is become an heavenly sign :  
There now the joy is his, here sorrow mine !

Such is an outline of Spenser's poem, called "The Ruins of Time." It is not, as the nominal subject might lead us to fear, a collection of wise-saws and common-place declamation—nor, as we might perhaps expect from its real subject, a tissue of empty compliments;—but, the generous outpouring of affection from a warm heart touched by the fire of true genius. The poem is of moderate size, containing in all six hundred and eighty-six lines. It is neither elaborate, nor highly finished; yet it does not merit the tone of disparagement with which it is sometimes mentioned. It is instinct with genius; it is eminently Spenserian; it is, with all its faults, eminently beautiful.

THE TEARS OF THE MUSES. The second poem in the collection of 1591, is entitled, The Tears of the Muses. This poem consists of the lamentations of the Nine Muses over the decay of learning, and the neglect with which poets and poetry were treated. Spenser's own career, and the brilliant success that immediately attended the publication of the *Fairy Queen*, contradict the whole tenor of his poem. Though published, therefore, in 1591, there is good reason to believe it was written long before. It not improbably was among his earliest attempts, composed before the author had yet tasted the sweets of public applause, and before he had yet found his own rich and peculiar vein. It has much in common with all mere croaking verses. It deals in generalities, avoiding, as the croakers usually do, troublesome specification of facts. Its versification, however, is smooth and harmonious, and the diction less antiquated than that in the *Shepherds' Calendar*. It consists of one hun-

dred stanzas of six lines each, making in all six hundred lines. The plan is perfectly simple and regular. First, the poet invokes the Nine Muses to rehearse to him the sorrowful complaints which he lately heard them making beside the sacred fount of poesy.

Rehearse to me, ye sacred Sisters nine,  
The golden brood of great Apollo's wit,  
Those piteous plaints and sorrowful sad time,\*  
Which late ye poured forth as ye did sit  
Beside the silver springs of Helicon,  
Making your music of heartbreaking moan!

This introductory invocation runs through nine stanzas. By this time the ladies appealed to, vouchsafe to do what is asked of them, each Muse in turn making her lament through ten stanzas, modelled after the one just quoted.

VIRGIL'S GNAT. The third poem in the collection under consideration is entitled, *Virgil's Gnat*. This is a sort of free translation or paraphrase of an ancient Latin poem called "*Culex*," [the Gnat,] and sometimes attributed to Virgil. Whatever merit or demerit is to be attached to the plot, belongs of course to the author of the original poem. The English dress—the versification and diction—is all for which we can fairly hold Spenser responsible. As to the verse, Spenser could hardly write otherwise than in flowing and harmonious numbers. The diction is much like that of the piece just criticized. The plan of the poem has some merit, and is briefly this.

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\* *Tine*, distress.



A shepherd once upon a time, reclining beneath the shade at noon on a sultry summer's day, fell asleep. A horrible and deadly serpent approached him and was about to inject his poisonous fang, when a GNAT, lighting upon the eyelid of the sleeper, commenced operations. Wakened by the sting of the gnat, the shepherd raised his hand to brush away his tormentor, and of course crushed the little creature. In so doing he killed his benefactor, for the gnat had awakened him just in time to save his life from the serpent. The following night, the ghost of the murdered gnat haunted his destroyer, and made such a terrible ado about the matter, that the shepherd finally paid solemn funeral rites, and erected a monument, to the mortal remains of his little friend. This gave the necessary facility to the passage of his ghost over that mournful stream which separates the souls of the blessed from the souls of those who have died by violence without enjoying the customary rites of sepulture.

The poem contains some specimens of the descriptive kind that are highly graphic. The following lines may be quoted in illustration. They describe the serpent approaching his covert, and preparing to attack the sleeping shepherd.

For at his wonted time in that same place  
An huge great serpent, all with speckles pied,  
To drench himself in moorish slime did trace,  
There from the boiling heat himself to hide :  
He, passing by with rolling wreathéd pace,  
With brandished tongue the empty air did gride,\*  
And wrapt his scaly bouts with fell despite,  
That all things seemed appalléd at his sight.

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\* *Gríde*, cut.



Now, more and more having himself enrolled,  
His glittering breast he lifted up on high,  
And with proud vaunt his head aloft doth hold ;  
His crest above, spotted with purple dye,  
On every side did shine like scaly gold ;  
And his bright eyes, glancing full dreadfully,  
Did seem to flame out flakes of flashing fire,  
And with stern looks to threaten kindled ire.

Thus wise, long time he did himself dispace  
There round about, whenas at last he spied,  
Lying along before him in that place,  
That flock's grand captain and most trusty guide :  
Eftsoons more fierce in visage, and in pace,  
Throwing his fiery eyes on every side,  
He cometh on, and all things in his way  
Full sternly rends, that might his passage stay.

Much he disdains, that any one should dare  
To come unto his haunt ; for which intent  
He inly burns, and 'gins straight to prepare  
The weapons, which Nature to him hath lent ;  
Felly he hisseth, and doth fiercely stare,  
And hath his jaws with angry spirits rent,  
That all his tract with bloody drops is stained,  
And all his folds are now in length outstrained.

On the whole the poem is tedious. It is in eight-line stanzas, eighty-six in number, making six hundred and eighty-eight lines. The dedication is remarkable. It is in these words: "Virgil's Gnat, long since dedicated to the most noble and excellent Lord, the Earl of Leicester, late deceased." This is followed by a dedicatory sonnet, addressed to the same, in which the author speaks enigmatically of certain wrongs endured which he dares not express, but which are known to Leicester.

Wronged yet not daring to express my pain,  
To you, great Lord, the causer of my care,  
In cloudy tears my care I thus complain  
Unto yourself, that only privy are.  
But if that any Œdipus unaware  
Shall chance, through power of some divining sprite,  
To read the secret of this riddle rare,  
And know the purport of my evil plight;  
Let him rest pleaséd with his own insight,  
Ne farther seek to gloss upon the text:  
For grief enough it is to grievéd wight,  
To feel his fault, and not be farther vexed.  
But what so by myself may not be shown,  
May by this Gnat's complaint be easily known.

As no Œdipus has yet appeared to resolve the enigma, we shall be obliged to let it pass on its way to oblivion, along with its friend and companion, "Virgil's Gnat."

MOTHER HUBBERD'S TALE. The fourth poem in the collection is entitled *Prosopopoia*, or *Mother Hubbard's Tale*. It differs from all the other writings of its distinguished author, being his only attempt at satire. It is a poem of considerable length, containing thirteen hundred and eighty-eight lines, is in the ten-syllable rhyming couplet of the *Canterbury Tales*, is written evidently in imitation of Chaucer, and is in all respects one of the most valuable of the author's minor pieces. Some brief account of it may perhaps be found not uninteresting.

The plan of the poem is this. The author, once upon a time, being sick and confined to his house, his friends visit him, and endeavour to divert his mind by telling a series of amusing stories. Among the rest, good Mother Hubbard gives a story in the shape of a

fable, so far surpassing the others, that, on recovering from his sickness, the poet resolves to commit it to writing. Hence the *name*, "Mother Hubberd's Tale."

Now for the tale or fable itself. A certain FOX, whose name is not given, and a certain APE, equally anonymous, tired of the dull routine of living by labour, as other foxes and apes do, resolved to try some way of living by their wits. To accomplish their purpose the better, they resolved furthermore to make the experiment together. The series of adventures through which these worthies passed in carrying out this experiment, forms the groundwork of the poem.

In describing these adventures, which are in various walks of life, the author hits off the vices and follies of society with great keenness and discrimination. There is, however, no bitterness or malice in these sketches. Bitterness indeed formed no part of the author's nature. He was a man too opulent in genius to be afraid of being considered amiable, one who could afford to be moral without the danger of being mistaken for a fool. That abounding sense of the beautiful and the good, which gave to the world the Fairy Queen—that generous outpouring of manly affection which dictated the Epithalamium—sprung from a heart too full of true greatness to leave room for the littleness of malice. Mother Hubberd's tale of the Fox and the Ape, however, shows that there may be *alkali* where there is no gall; while the wholesome and discriminating manner in which the caustic is applied, is in itself convincing proof that the prevailing benevolence of the author's writings sprung from a softness of the heart, not of the head.

But to proceed with the fable. The Fox and the

Ape, after discussing sundry devices for living by their wits, try at length the following. They dress themselves in the apparel of old soldiers, broken down and maimed by the wars, and travel about the country begging. This gives the author an opportunity of satirizing the whole class of *military mendicants*—high and low—the beggars for crumbs and old clothes, and the aspirants for office and treasury pap. The whole passage contains some palpable hits at practices and opinions not obsolete since the days of Elizabeth.

Our friends, Messrs. Fox and Ape, are at length detected, as other gentlemen of that line of business have been both before and since. Obligated to quit that vocation,

Yet would they take no pains to get their living,  
But seek some other way to gain by giving,  
Much like to begging, but much better named ;  
For many beg who are thereof ashamed.  
And now the Fox hath gotten him a *gown*,  
And th' Ape a *cassock* sidelong hanging down.

In short, they try their luck at *clerical* mendicancy, first as two wandering friars, and then as parish priest and clerk. Here in turn the abuses of the church pass under review, and receive no small portion of the alkali already mentioned.

The third adventure of the pair is as *courtiers*. Sir Ape, dressed in some outlandish costume, plays the part of Monsieur Magnifico resident at Court, while Mr. Reynold Fox, his serving-man, devises the “ways and means” of keeping up the delusion. Impudence and pretension are in all ages the same. The honest tradesman of Chestnut Street or Broadway, who has sold his goods on the mere credit of a titled name, or a



moustache à la Turk, may find a profitable, if not a pleasing coincidence, in the way in which our friend Mr. Reynold supplied the wants of himself and master. The finest passages in the whole poem occur in this part of it. It contains not only a description of the pretender and the sycophant, and of the contemptible shifts to which they are perpetually driven, in the attempt to appear what they are not, but also a description of the true courtier. In the delineation of this beautiful character, the author has given us a full-length portrait of his noble and gallant friend Sir Philip Sidney. The whole passage is too long for quotation. A few lines will show the spirit in which the character is conceived.

He stands on terms of honourable mind,  
Ne will be carried with the common wind  
Of Courts' inconstant mutability,  
Ne after every tattling fable fly;  
But hears and sees the follies of the rest,  
And thereof gathers for himself the best;  
He will not creep nor crouch with feignéd face,  
But walks upright, with comely steadfast pace,  
And unto all doth yield due courtesie;  
But not with kisséd hand below the knee,  
As that same apish crew is wont to do;  
For he disdains himself to embase thereto.  
He hates foul leasings, and vile flattery,  
Two filthy blots in noble gentrie;\*  
And loathful idleness he doth detest,  
The canker-worm of every gentle breast.  
The which to banish with fair exercise  
Of knightly feats, he daily doth devise:  
Now managing the mouths of stubborn steeds,  
Now practising the proof of warlike deeds,

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\* Pronounced by Spenser as a trisyllable, or as if written "gen-te-rie."



Now his bright arms assaying, now his spear,  
Now the nigh-aiméd ring away to bear.  
At other times he casts to 'sue the chase  
Of swift wild beasts, or run on foot a race.  
Thus when this courtly gentleman with toil  
Himself hath weariéd, he doth recoil  
Unto his rest, and there with sweet delight  
Of music's skill revives his toiléd sprite.  
Or else, with love's, and ladies' gentle sports,  
The joy of youth, himself he recomfórts.  
Or lastly, when his body list to pause,  
His mind unto the muses he withdraws:—  
Sweet lady muses, ladies of delight,  
Delights of life, and ornaments of life!  
With whom he close confers with wise discourse,  
Of nature's works, of heaven's continual course,  
Of foreign lands, of people different,  
Of kingdoms' change, of diverse government,  
Of dreadful battles of renownéd knights.  
With [these] he kindleth his ambitious sprites  
To like desire and praise of noble fame,  
The only upshot whereto he doth aim:  
For all his mind on honour fixé is,  
To which he levels all his purposes,  
And in his Prince's service spends his days,  
Not so much for to gain, or for to raise  
Himself to high degree, as for his grace,  
And in his liking to win worthy place.

This part of the poem contains also those lines so often quoted, descriptive of the misery of a courtier's life, and generally supposed to refer to some grievance which Spenser had experienced at the hand of Lord Burleigh.

Full little knowest thou, that hast not tried,  
What hell it is in suing long to bide:  
To lose good days that might be better spent;  
To waste long nights in pensive discontent;

To speed to-day, to be put back to-morrow ;  
To feed on hope, to pine on fear and sorrow ;  
To have thy Princess' grace, yet want her Peer's ;  
To have thy asking, yet wait many years ;  
To fret thy soul with crosses and with cares ;  
To eat thy heart through comfortless despairs ;  
To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,  
To spend, to give, to want, to be undone !

But all things have an end, and so did the imposture of Sir Ape and Mr. Reynold. Being once more exposed, these gentlemen escape to their native forest. There by accident they find the lion, king of beasts, asleep upon a bank, with his sceptre, crown, and royal mantle lying on the ground beside him. A new thought occurs. They contrive to secure the continuance of sleep to his majesty, by laying before his nostrils the leaves of a soporiferous plant, and then to steal the awful insignia of office. The Fox, who did not like, even under these circumstances, to trust himself too near to "dangerous majesty," flattered the Ape into the belief that his limbs were much more supple, and more suited to the performance of so delicate and daring a feat. The stealthy and timorous approach of the Ape to the sleeping lion, is very graphically described.

Afraid of every leaf that stirred him by,  
And every stick that underneath did lie,  
Upon his tiptoes nicely he upwent,  
For fear of making noise, and still his ear he lent  
To every sound that under heaven blew ;  
Now went, now stept, now crept, now backward drew.

For a time, at least, they succeed. The Ape, dressed in the lion's skin, and bearing the royal crown

and sceptre, under the guidance of his wily Prime Minister, the Fox, undertakes the government of the beastly kingdom. The evils experienced by a kingdom under the reign of a feeble prince, guided by a crafty and corrupt minister, are then satirized in a manner indicating not merely skill as a satirist, but, knowledge of public affairs and political sagacity. There is, however, nothing in the poem itself half so severe as the use made of it in the latter part of the last century. Some parts of the poem, particularly the *coalition ministry*, formed by Sir Reynold Fox, under King Ape, were supposed to tally so well with the state of affairs in Great Britain, during a certain part of the reign of George III., that the poem was republished in 1784, with a political commentary, and a special dedication to the existing minister, the HON. CHARLES JAMES FOX!

But to return to *our* Fox and Ape. The lion wakes at last. Seeing the imposture that has been practised, he gives a roar that sends terror through the hearts of the impostors. Their villany is fully exposed and punished, and thus ends Mother Hubbard's Tale.

Of the character of this poem, it will not be necessary to say much, after the full analysis which has been given of its contents. It is, by general consent, one of the best of the author's minor pieces; and it is regarded with the greater interest, as showing more than any other, the versatility of his genius. The works by which he is chiefly known to the world, are characterized by an exuberance of ornament, a certain stateliness of style and diction, a solemn pomp and grandeur, and a peculiar fervour and earnestness of

feeling, that seem inconsistent with the ability to excel in satire. In *Mother Hubbard's Tale*, however, he exhibits much practical knowledge of men, and the motives that govern them, as well as skill in the adaptation of his style to his subject; being at once easy and familiar, without becoming trite or vulgar. He does not, indeed, reach that peculiar sly humour, in which old Chaucer stands apparently unapproachable; but he often shows a vivacity, terseness, and vigour of expression, that remind the reader forcibly of Pope and Dryden. He *might* undoubtedly have excelled in this species of writing, and probably would have done so,—had he not found for himself “a more excellent way.”

THE RUINS OF ROME. The fifth poem in the collection of 1591, is *The Ruins of Rome*. It is, like Virgil's *Gnat*, merely a translation. About the middle of the sixteenth century, Bellay, a popular French poet, one of the seven called the *Pleiades*, published a poem respecting the antiquities of Rome, containing a general description of its greatness, and a lamentation for its decay. Spenser's poem is a version of this. It consists of thirty-three stanzas, each stanza being of sonnet-metre, that is, consisting of fourteen ten-syllable lines, making therefore in all, four hundred and sixty-two lines. Neither the diction nor the versification appears to me to be equal to Spenser's usual style. There are, however, some stanzas, of which no one need be ashamed, either for the thought or the expression. The following is considered a favourable specimen :



Who list the Roman greatness forth to figure,  
Him needeth not to seek for usage right  
Of line, or lead, or rule, or square, to measure  
Her length, her breadth, her deepness, or her height ;  
But him behoves to view in compass round  
All that the ocean grasps in his long arms ;  
Be it where the yearly star doth scorch the ground,  
Or where cold Boreas blows his bitter storms.  
Rome was th' whole world, and all the world was Rome ;  
And if things named their names do equalize,  
When land and sea ye name, then name ye Rome ;  
And, naming Rome, ye land and sea comprise ;  
For th' ancient plot of Rome, displayéd plain,  
The map of all the wide world doth contain.

This poem was followed by a series of pieces of the same character and form, under the title of VISIONS. These were, first, "Visions of the World's Vanity," by the author, consisting of twelve stanzas of the sonnet-metre ; secondly, "Visions of Bellay," being another translation from the French author just noticed, and consisting of fifteen of these sonnet-stanzas ; and thirdly, "Visions of Petrarch," being a translation from the Italian, and consisting of seven stanzas. The three sets of Visions, therefore, are alike as to form, Bellay's being modelled after Petrarch's, and Spenser's after both. The Ruins of Rome just mentioned, and the Visions at the close of the Ruins of Time, are also in the same form. This method of writing on any subject, will be better understood perhaps by dwelling a moment upon a single example. The "Visions of the World's Vanity," for instance, in the present series, consists of twelve stanzas. Each of these stanzas is, strictly speaking, a Sonnet. It is in the form appropriate to that species of poem, contains one leading



thought or picture, is complete in itself, and is unconnected grammatically with what goes before and after. While, however, the stanzas or sonnets are grammatically disconnected, there is a general bond of union, growing out of the sense. While each stanza presents a separate and distinct picture, all the stanzas in any particular series are intended to illustrate some one leading idea. The idea to be illustrated in the present instance is, that the greatest creatures are not beyond the reach of annoyance from the least and the feeblest. The sentiment is a pretty one. The manner in which it is illustrated, will appear from the following specimens.

In summer's day, when Phœbus fairly shone,  
 I saw a BULL as white as driven snow,  
 With gilden horns embowéd like the moon,  
 In a fresh flowering meadow lying low :  
 Up to his ears the verdant grass did grow,  
 And the gay flowers did offer to be eaten ;  
 But he with fatness so did overflow,  
 That he all wallowed in the weeds down beaten,  
 Ne car'd with them his dainty lips to sweeten :  
 Till that a BRIZE,\* a scornéd little creature,  
 Through his fair hide his angry sting did threaten,  
 And vexed so sore that all his goodly feature  
 And all his plenteous pasture nought him pleased :  
 So by the small the great is oft diseased.†

Soon after this I saw an ELEPHANT,  
 Adorn'd with bells and bosses gorgeously,  
 That on his back did bear, as battailant,‡  
 A gilden tower, which shone exceedingly ;  
 That he himself through foolish vanity,  
 Both for his rich attire, and goodly form,  
 Was pufféd up with passing surquedry,§

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\* *Brize*, gadfly.    † *Diseased* (*dis-eased*) made uneasy.    ‡ *Battailant*, battling  
 § *Surquedry*, pride.

And shortly 'gan all other beasts to scorn.  
 Till that a little ANT, a silly worm,  
 Into his nostrils creeping, so him pained,  
 That, casting down his towers, he did deform  
 Both borrowed pride, and native beauty stained.  
 Let therefore nought, that great is, therein glory,  
 Since so small thing his happiness may vary.

A mighty LION, lord of all the wood,  
 Having his hunger throughly satisfied  
 With prey of beasts and spoil of living blood,  
 Safe in his dreadless den him thought to hide :  
 His sternness was his praise, his strength his pride,  
 And all his glory in his cruel claws.  
 I saw a WASP, that fiercely him defied,  
 And bade him battle even to his jaws ;  
 Sore he him stung, that it the blood forth draws,  
 And his proud heart is filled with fretting ire :  
 In vain he threats his teeth, his tail, his paws,  
 And from his bloody eyes doth sparkle fire ;  
 That dead himself he wisheth for despite.  
 So weakest may annoy the most of might !

The same sentiment is illustrated by the example of the Crocodile, dependent upon the little *tedula*, to deliver him from the leeches clinging to his jaws ; the Eagle driven from his lordly nest, by the artifice of a miserable beetle ; the huge Leviathan, tormented by the swordfish ; the Dragon, poisoned by the spider ; the stately Cedar, brought to decay by a pitiful worm at its root ; and so on, every stanza in the series presenting a separate and independent picture, but all illustrating one leading idea.

I have thus endeavoured to give a distinct, if not a succinct, account of all the poems except one, contained in the collection of 1591. They are (1) The Ruins of Time, (2) The Tears of the Muses, (3) Virgil's Gnat,

(4) Mother Hubbard's Tale, (5) The Ruins of Rome, and (6) Visions. These poems had been previously circulated in manuscript, among the friends of the author, but were collected and published in 1591, in consequence of the favourable reception given to the three books of the Fairy Queen, published the year previous.

There was still one other poem in the collection under discussion. This has been reserved for a separate consideration, partly because there is evidence of its having been published separately in the year previous, and partly because it has in itself some properties that seem to entitle it to a distinct notice. Many of the minor poems of Spenser have been thrown undeservedly into the shade by the extraordinary excellence of the Fairy Queen. Among the pieces thus almost consigned to oblivion, is the little poem now to be noticed. In endeavouring to give the reader some definite idea of its character, I shall, as in other cases, not attempt a laboured antithesis of its good and bad qualities, but simply give extracts from the poem itself, with such connecting remarks as seem necessary to make the extracts intelligible. The reader will thus be put in possession, not of a formal judgment upon the merits of the poem, but of the materials necessary to form a judgment of his own.

The title, ΜΥΙΟΠΟΤΜΟΣ (*Fate of the Butterfly*, *μυια, ποτμος*), is indicative of its subject. The poem relates the adventures and the tragical end of the particular Fly, who is now about to be introduced to the reader.

CLARION, the son of Muscaroll, was the fairest butterfly, the noblest and purest-minded youth, that

ever fluttered in the breeze, or panted in the sun-beam.

Of all the race of silver-wingéd Flies  
Which do possess the empire of the air,  
Betwixt the centred earth and azure skies,  
Was none more favourable, nor more fair,  
(Whilst Heaven did favour his felicities),  
Than CLARION, the eldest son and heir  
Of Muscaroll, and in his father's sight  
Of all alive did seem the fairest wight.

The fresh young Fly, in whom the kindly fire  
Of lustful youth began to kindle fast,  
Did much disdain to subject his desire  
To loathsome sloth, or hours in ease to waste ;  
But joyed to range abroad in fresh attire,  
Through the wide compass of the airy coast ;  
And, with unwearied wings, each part t' inquire  
Of the wide rule of his renownéd sire.

For he so swift and nimble was of flight,  
That from this lower tract he dared to stie\*  
Up to the clouds, and thence with pinions light  
To mount aloft unto the crystal sky,  
To view the workmanship of heaven's height :  
Whence, down descending, he along would fly  
Upon the streaming rivers, sport to find ;  
And oft would dare to tempt the troublous wind.

One bright, clear morning in summer, young Clarion, bent on an excursion through his father's dominions in search of knowledge and pleasure, arrayed himself for the purpose in the beautiful apparel appropriate to his tribe, and the polished armour adapted equally to adorn and defend his princely person. Perhaps, gentle reader, you have

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\* Mount.



been accustomed to think of the butterfly as a mere insect—very pretty indeed, but very insignificant. Little did you know what formidable armour rests upon those manly limbs, or how loyal and valorous a heart that armour encloses. Look, then, at this exquisite creature, the princely Clarion, before he sets out on his gay excursion, and behold, to your surprise, the terror of Mars added to the beauty of Hyperion. Observe, in the first place, the impenetrable BREAST-PLATE upon his ample chest :

His *breast-plate* first, that was of substance pure,  
Before his noble heart he firmly bound,  
That might his life from iron death assure,  
And ward his gentle corpse from cruel wound :  
For it by art was framéd to endure  
The bite of baleful steel and bitter stound,\*  
No less than that which Vulcan made to shield  
Achilles' life from fate of Trojan field.

Hercules of old wore upon his shoulders the skin of the Nemæan lion which he had slain. The son of Muscaroll rejoices in the possession of a trophy equally formidable.

And then about his shoulders broad he threw  
A hairy hide of some wild beast that he  
In savage forest by adventure slew,  
And reft the spoil his ornament to be ;  
Which, spreading all his back with dreadful view,  
Made all, that him so horrible did see,  
Think him Alcides with the Lion's skin,  
When the Nemæan conquest he did win.

No warrior ever had a firmer HELMET than that

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\* Blow.



hard and shining case which covered the head of Clarion.

Upon his head, his glistening *burganet*,\*  
 The which was wrought by wondérous device,  
 And curiously engraven, he did set:  
 The metal was of rare and passing price:  
 Not Bilbo steel, nor brass from Corinth fet,  
 Nor costly oricalch from strange Phœnice;  
 But such as could both Phœbus' arrows ward,  
 And the hailing darts of heaven beating hard.

Extending far in front of the bristling warrior, were his two principal weapons of offence. The Naturalists are pleased to call them *antennæ*; Nature meant them for SPEARS.

Therein two deadly weapons fixed he bore,  
 Strongly outlancéd towards either side,  
 Like two sharp *spears*, his enemies to gore;  
 Like as a warlike brigandine,† applied  
 To fight, lays forth her threatful pikes before,  
 The engines which in them sad death do hide:  
 So did this Fly outstretch his fearful horns,  
 Yet so as him their terror more adorns.

Finally, these formidable weapons both of offence and defence, are rendered doubly effective by the prodigious power of locomotion which their owner possesses. This power he derives from his WINGS—those “sail-broad vans,” intended not less for use than ornament.

Lastly, his shining *wings* as silver bright,  
 Painted with thousand colours passing far  
 All painter's skill, he did about him dight:  
 Not half so many sundry colours are

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\* Helmet.

† A small vessel.

In Iris' bow ; ne heaven doth shine so bright,  
Distinguishéd with many a twinkling star ;  
Nor Juno's bird, in her eye-spotted train,  
So many goodly colours doth contain.

In an episode which follows, but which is too long to quote, we are informed of the origin of the extraordinary beauty found in the wings of the butterfly race. The substance of this tradition is as follows :

Once in early spring-time, Dame Venus, walking abroad with her nymphs, ordered the flocking damsels to seek among the fields fresh flowers wherewith to array her queenly forehead. The meek and nimble-footed ASTERY, more active and more tasteful than her companions, gathered not only a larger number of these sweet "children of the spring" than did they, but flowers so far surpassing theirs in hue and fragrance, as to win for her the marked favour of the Goddess of beauty. The rival nymphs meanly insinuated that Astery had help from Master Cupid, who was a sly boy, as his mother well knew. Venus believed the well-invented lie, and in a sudden fit of jealousy executed her revenge. Astery, the meek and gentle maid, was transformed into a butterfly ; and *all those brilliant flowers, which had been the cause of her mishap, were painted upon her wings, in memory of her pretended crime.*

Eftsoons\* that damsel, by her heavenly might,  
She turned into a wingéd Butterfly,  
In the wide air to make her wandering flight ;  
And all those flowers, with which so plenteously  
Her lap she filléd had, that bred her spite,  
She placéd in her wings, for memory

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\* Immediately.

Of her pretended crime, though crime none were :  
Since which that Fly them in her wings doth bear.

And so ever since this transformation of the meek-eyed Astery, the Butterfly race have been distinguished for the unsurpassable beauty of their flower-painted wings.

But to return from this episode.

Behold then *our* Fly, the gallant and joyous young squire, CLARION, the son of Muscaroll, the beau-ideal of gladness of heart, the impersonation of manly strength and beauty,

“The expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,  
The observed of all observers ;”

behold him, I say, on this bright summer morning, going forth to his adventure, in all the splendour of a youthful hero, with all the gayety of an expectant bridegroom.

Thus the fresh CLARION, being ready dight,  
Unto his journey did himself address,  
And with good speed began to take his flight,  
Over the fields, in his frank lustiness,  
And all the champaign o’er he soared light ;  
And all the country wide he did possess,  
Feeding upon their pleasures bounteously,  
That none gainsaid, nor none did him envy.

The woods, the rivers, and the meadows green,  
With his air-cutting wings he measured wide,  
Ne did he leave the mountains bare unseen,  
Nor the rank grassy fens’ delights untried.  
But none of these, however sweet they been,  
Might please his fancy, nor him cause to abide :  
His choiceful sense with every change doth flit ;  
No common things may please a wavering wit.

To the gay gardens his unstaide desire  
Him wholly carried, to refresh his sprites :  
There lavish Nature, in her best attire,  
Pours forth sweet odours and alluring sights ;  
And Art, with her contending, doth aspire  
To excel the natural with made delights :  
And all, that fair or pleasant may be found,  
In riotous excess doth there abound.

There he arriving, round about doth fly,  
From bed to bed, from one to other border ;  
And takes survey, with curious busy eye,  
Of every flower and herb there set in order :  
Now this, now that he tasteth tenderly,  
Yet none of them he rudely doth disorder,  
Ne with his feet their silken leaves deface ;  
But pastures on the pleasures of each place.

And evermore with most variety,  
And change of sweetness, (for all change is sweet,)  
He casts his glutton sense to satisfy,  
Now sucking of the sap of herb most meet,  
Or of the dew which yet on them does lie,  
Now in the same bathing his tender feet :  
And then he percheth on some branch thereby,  
To weather him, and his moist wings to dry.

Never surely was there an instance of more abound-  
ing gladfulness, of more princely joyance.

What more felicity can fall to creature,  
Than to enjoy delight with liberty,  
And to be lord of all the works of Nature,  
To reign in the air from the earth to highest sky,  
To feed on flowers and weeds of glorious feature,  
To take whatever thing doth please the eye ?  
Who rests not pleaséd with such happiness,  
Well worthy he to taste of wretchedness.

But who may insure the continuance of earthly

bliss? The brightest morning is often overclouded before night. Perils beset us on every side. Earth, air, fire, day, night, the elements, the seasons, *every* thing, within and around us, threatens continually the fabric of human happiness. Why then should CLARION be exempt?

The particular danger which at this time threatened our hero, arose from the malice of a wicked and hateful SPIDER, who had his abode in this beautiful garden.

It fortunéd (as Heavens had behight)  
That in this garden, where young Clarion  
Was wont to solace him, a wicked wight  
Had lately built his hateful mansion ;  
And, lurking closely, in await now lay,  
How he might any in his trap betray.

But when he spied the joyous Butterfly  
In this fair plot disacing to and fro,  
Fearless of foes and hidden jeopardy,  
Lord ! how he gan for to bestir him tho ;\*  
And to his wicked work each part apply !  
His heart did yearn against his hated foe,  
And bowels so with rankling poison swelled,  
That scarce the skin the strong contagion held.

The name of this malicious and wily foe is ARAGNOLL. It is a patronymic noun, and means in the Fairies' Lexicon, the son of Arachne (*Αραχνη*). The circumstances lead to another exquisite episode, explaining the cause of the special hate that spiders bear to butterflies.

Arachne was once a woman, the most skilful at embroidery of all the daughters of earth—so confident indeed of her powers, that she presumed to challenge,

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\* Then.



to a competition in her art, divine Pallas herself, the Goddess of wisdom and skill. Pallas did not refuse the contest. As a test of their skill, each wrought a piece of embroidery, representing some well-known historical event. That of Arachne represented the story of Jupiter, in the form of a bull, carrying off Europa. The embroidery is described at length. It was so beautiful, so lifelike, so faultless, that Pallas, nay Envy herself, could say nought against its excellence. Pallas then tried her skill. She embroidered a piece representing the debates of the Gods respecting the fate of Athens. This picture also was exquisite, but still not such as clearly to decide the yet doubtful contest. At last, in one part of the scene, among the leaves of an olive-tree which she had introduced into the picture, she wrought an exact likeness of the most beautiful object this side of Fairy Land.

Amongst these leaves she made a BUTTERFLY,  
With excellent device and wondrous sleight,  
Fluttering among the olives wantonly,  
That seemed to live, so like it was in sight:  
The velvet nap which on its wings doth lie,  
The silken down with which his back is dight,  
His broad outstretchéd horns, his hairy thighs,  
His glorious colours, and his glistering eyes.

While Pallas was finishing this piece of unmatchable workmanship, Arachne looking on, felt herself vanquished; and she immediately experienced in her own person that loathsome change of form, which was the appropriate punishment of her presumption.

Which when Arachne saw, as overlaid,  
And masteréd with workmanship so rare,

She stood astonied, ne aught gainsaid ;  
And with fast-fixéd eyes on her did stare,  
And by her silence, sign of one dismayed,  
The victory did yield her as her share ;  
Yet did she inly fret and felly burn,  
And all her blood to poisonous rancour turn :

That shortly from the shape of womanhood,  
Such as she was when Pallas she attempted,  
She grew to hideous shape of drearyhood,  
Pinéd with grief of folly late repented :  
Eftsoons her white straight legs were alteréd  
To crooked crawling shanks, of marrow emptied.  
And her fair face to foul and loathsome hue,  
And her fine corpse to a bag of venom grew.

Henceforth the reader will always more clearly understand why ARAGNOLL, born of the wretched Arachne, owed a special grudge to the youthful Clarion ; since it was the unmatched beauty of this butterfly race which had been the cause of Arachne's defeat and degradation.

This cursed creature, mindful of that old  
Infested grudge, the which his mother felt,  
So soon as CLARION he did behold,  
His heart with vengeful malice inly swelt :  
And weaving straight a net with many a fold  
About the cave in which he lurking dwelt,  
With fine small cords about it stretchéd wide,  
So finely spun, that scarce they could be spied.

But why prolong the agony ?—CLARION, guileless, careless, glad-hearted Clarion, is caught of course in the net of his wily and hateful foe. “ Poor liméd soul, that struggling to be free, art more engaged ! ” ARAGNOLL, the grisly tyrant, waiting his time, rushed forth from his den, and

“ With fell spite,  
Under the left wing strook his weapon sly  
Into the very heart”

of CLARION :—and so ends the tale of MUIOPOTMOS, or  
“The Fate of the Butterfly.”

I have quoted so freely from this poem, that it seems hardly necessary to characterize in a formal manner its merits. The whole conception is one essentially beautiful. I know not how it may strike others ; but for myself, I would not give one such piece of pure glad-heartedness, for whole volumes of bitter irony and dark imaginings. The rhythm of the verse is as flowing and joyous as was Clarion himself on that bright summer morning, while, for numberless delicate graces and beauties of thought and diction, the poem must for ever stand among the poetry of Spenser, like its own Butterfly among the olive leaves in the embroidery of Pallas !

## CHAPTER IV.

Spenser again visits London—Publication of the *Daphnaida*—Account of this Poem—Colin Clout's come Home again—Astrophel and other Elegies in Honour of Sir Philip Sidney—The Sonnets—Elizabeth—Courtship—Marriage—The Epithalamium—Prothalamium—Hymns—Anacreontics—View of the State of Ireland—Two Cantos of Mutability—Kilcolman burnt by the Rebels—Spenser's Death and Monument.

SPENSER came from his residence in Ireland to London with Sir Walter Raleigh, in 1590, for the purpose of publishing the first three books of the *Fairy Queen*. This being accomplished, he returned to Ireland. In the early part of the following year, 1591, the poems noticed in the previous chapter were published in one volume in the absence of the author from London. At the close of this year, Spenser returned to the city, though for what purpose, or how long he remained there, is not known. The fact of his being there, is evident from the poem next to be mentioned, the Dedication of which is dated at London, January 1, 1591–2. Of this poem which was probably written at London about the time of its publication, and while the author was there on a visit, I now proceed to give some account.

DAPHNAIDA. This is an Elegy upon the death of the noble Lady Douglas Howard, daughter of Lord Howard, and wife of Arthur Gorges, Esq. It is dedicated to another noble lady, Helena, Marquess of Northampton. There is nothing in the history or



character of any of these personages that adds special interest or value to the poem. The parties named, particularly Gorges, seem to have been personal friends of Spenser. The date of the dedication already given, is supposed to mark the time of the composition. The date of the publication is not certainly known, but the presumption and the general opinion is that the *Daphnaida* was published soon after it was written, probably in the early part of 1592.

The poem is a lamentation for the death of the noble lady already mentioned, the wife of his friend Gorges. Gorges is represented as a shepherd, named Alcyon, mourning and disconsolate for the loss of his shepherdess, Daphne. Hence the title "*Daphnaida*," verses in honour of Daphne. This poem, though relating professedly to the parties named, has nothing in it (with one exception) that is special. There was nothing peculiar in the character or circumstances either of the mourner or the person mourned—nothing to make the sentiments uttered suit Alcyon and Daphne, that is Gorges and the Lady Douglas Howard, more than any other loving husband and wife, separated prematurely by death. The poem therefore is not fairly open to the criticism sometimes made, namely, that it rehearses the sufferings of parties and families in which we of the present day feel no interest. It does no such thing. With the single exception that Alcyon, in first communicating his loss to his fellow-shepherd, speaks of his wife under the fable of a *White Lioness*, in allusion to the lion in the arms of the noble lady's family, there is nothing to connect the sentiments of the poem with any particular family, country, or time. The sentiments themselves, however, are fairly open



to criticism. There is a tone of exaggeration and extravagance in the language which makes it rather tiresome. Still the *Daphnaida* is not without its beauties. It has many touches of genuine pathos. The following stanzas are among the most pleasing in the poem. They represent the grief of Alcyon, when recalling the dying words of his wife.

So oft as I record those piercing words,  
Which yet are deep engraven in my breast ;  
And those last deadly accents, which like swords  
Did wound my heart, and rend my bleeding chest,  
With those sweet sugared speeches do compare,  
The which my soul first conquered and possessed,  
The first beginners of my endless care :

And when those pallid cheeks and ashy hue,  
In which sad Death his portraiture had writ,  
And when those hollow eyes and deadly view,  
On which the cloud of ghastly Night did sit,  
I match with that sweet smile and cheerful brow,  
Which all the world subduéd unto it,  
How happy was I then, and wretched now !

How happy was I when I saw her lead  
The shepherds' daughters dancing in a round !  
How trimly would she trace and softly tread  
The tender grass, with rosy garland crowned !  
And, when she list advance her heavenly voice,  
Both Nymphs and Muses nigh she made astound,  
And flocks and shepherds causéd to rejoice.

But now, ye shepherd lasses ! who shall lead  
Your wandering troops, or sing your virelays ?  
Or who shall dight your bowers, since she is dead  
That was the lady of your holy-days ?  
Let now your bliss be turnéd into bale,  
And into plaints convert your joyous plays,  
And with the same fill every hill and dale.

The poem is throughout in stanzas of the above form. There are eighty-one stanzas, making five hundred and sixty-seven lines. To ring the changes on one single sentiment through so long a poem, almost necessarily leads to violent and forced expressions. The critic will be pardoned, perhaps, who finds in the *Daphnida*, notwithstanding its many beauties, new illustrations of Shakspeare's phrase, "to tear a passion to tatters." The passion of grief is here, if not actually "torn," certainly worn rather threadbare.

COLIN CLOUT'S COME HOME AGAIN. Spenser's next publication is dated 1595. It was a quarto volume containing several poems, of which the first and most considerable was entitled *Colin Clout's come Home again*. This poem is dedicated to Sir Walter Raleigh. The dedication is dated at Kilcolman Castle, Ireland, December 27, 1591. The date of the dedication has led to a good deal of discussion. The common opinion is, that it is a misprint for 1594. This, however, is by no means certain. I am inclined to think the poem was written by Spenser at the time named, and that its publication was delayed for reasons best known to the publisher, or to Raleigh.

The occasion of this poem is sufficiently explained by the contents. Spenser having spent some time in London, attending to the publication of his poems, on returning to his adopted home in Ireland, wrote this poem in commemoration of his journey and of the reception which he had met with at Court. The poem is of the pastoral kind, and the author again appears in the character of the rustic COLIN, which he had assumed in the *Shepherd's Calendar* fifteen years

before. He now appears as having just returned among his brother shepherds, after an absence of a year or two. Hence the title, "Colin Clout 's come Home again."

The poem contains many notices of the friends of Spenser at Court, as well as a sketch of his voyage from Ireland to London. These notices are valuable in eking out the very imperfect materials which we have for the life of the author. They are, however, devoid of that general interest which would make them attractive now. At the same time, in his descriptions of Court life, there are passages not a few in which, as in *Mother Hubbard's Tale*, the sentiment is general, and is as true and as full of interest now, as when it was written. A brief sketch of the poem therefore will be given.

Imagine then our friend Colin, once upon a time, seated with a company of shepherds and shepherdesses, playing upon his oaten pipe. One of them, Hobbino (Gabriel Harvey), tells him how much he was missed during his late absence, and how much he had gladdened them by his return, and begs him to entertain them with some account of his adventures.

Colin, my lief, my life, how great a loss

Had all the shepherds' nation by thy lack!

And I, poor swain, of many, greatest cross!

That since thy Muse first since thy turning back

Was heard to sound as she was wont on high,

Hast made us all so blessed and so blithe.

Whilst thou wast hence, all dead in dole did lie:

The woods were heard to wail full many a sithe,\*

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\* *Sithe*, time.

And all their birds with silence to complain :  
 The fields with faded flowers did seem to mourn,  
 And all their flocks from feeding to refrain :  
 The running waters wept for thy return,  
 And all their fish with languor did lament ;  
 But now both woods and fields and floods revive,  
 Since thou art come, their cause of merriment,  
 That us, late dead, hast made again alive :  
 But were it not too painful to repeat  
 The passéd fortunes, which to thee befell  
 In thy late voyage, we thee would entreat,  
 Now at thy leisure them to us to tell.

Colin does what is asked without further solicitation. And first, he gives an account of the cause of his leaving home. He was advised and encouraged to do so by the "Shepherd of the Ocean" (Sir Walter Raleigh), of whose visit to Kilcolman Castle an account has been given in a former chapter. Here is Colin's own account of this celebrated visit.

One day (quoth he) I sat, (as was my trade)  
 Under the foot of Mole, that mountain hoar,  
 Keeping my sheep amongst the cool shade  
 Of the green alders by the Mulla's shore :  
 There a strange shepherd chanced to find me out,  
 Whether alluréd with my pipe's delight,  
 Whose pleasing sound yshrillé\* far about,  
 Or thither led by chance, I know not right :  
 Whom when I askéd from what place he came,  
 And how he hight,† himself he did ycelep  
 The Shepherd of the Ocean‡ by name,  
 And said he came far from the main-sea deep.  
 He, sitting me beside in that same shade,  
 Provokéd me to play some pleasant fit ;

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\* *Yshrilled*, shrilled. † *Hight*, was called. ‡ *Ocean*, pronounced by Spenser as a trisyllable, O-ce-an.



And, when he heard the music which I made,  
 He found himself full greatly pleased at it:  
 Yet æmuling my pipe, he took in hond  
 My pipe, before that æmuléd of many,  
 And played thereon; (for well that skill he cond;\*)  
 Himself as skilful in that art as any.  
 He piped, I sung; and when he sung, I piped;  
 By change of turns, each making other merry;  
 Neither envying other, nor envied,  
 So pipéd we, until we both were weary.

Several pages are occupied with the rehearsal of what took place at this interview. At length, Colin goes on to say, that the Shepherd of the Ocean expressed a great liking for his poetry, and grieved that his talents should be buried here in obscurity, and farther proposed that they should sail in company to the Court of the great Queen Cynthia (Elizabeth).

When thus our pipes we both had wearied well,  
 (Quoth he) and each an end of singing made,  
 He 'gan to cast great liking to my lore,  
 And great disliking to my luckless lot,  
 That banished had myself, like wight forlore,  
 Into that waste where I was quite forgot.  
 The which to leave thenceforth he counselled me,  
 Unmeet for man, in whom was aught regardful,  
 And wend with him, his Cynthia to see;  
 Whose grace was great, and bounty most rewardful.  
 Besides her peerless skill in making well,  
 And all the ornaments of wondrous wit,  
 Such as all womankind did far excel;  
 Such as the world admired and praiséd it:  
 So what with hope of good, and hate of ill,  
 He me persuaded forth with him to fare.  
 Nought took I with me, but mine oaten quill:  
 Small needments else need shepherd to prepare.

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\* *Cond* (conned), knew.



Colin goes on to give a shepherd-like, but highly poetical narrative of their voyage, and also of their journey to Court after landing. He eulogizes in high terms the goodly realm of England, and spares not his praises of its maiden Queen.

Forth on our voyage we by land did pass,  
(Quoth he) as that same shepherd still us guided,  
Until that we to Cynthia's presence came :

Whose glory greater than my simple thought,  
I found much greater than the former fame ;  
Such greatness I cannot compare to ought :  
But if I her like ought on earth might read,

I would her liken to a crown of lilies,  
Upon a virgin bride's adorned head,  
With roses dight and golds and daffodillies ;  
Or like the circlet of a turtle true,

In which all colours of the rainbow be ;  
Or like fair Phebe's garland shining new,  
In which all pure perfection one may see.  
But vain it is to think, by paragon

Of earthly things, to judge of things divine :  
Her power, her mercy, and her wisdom, none  
Can deem, but who the Godhead can define.  
Why then do I, base shepherd, bold and blind,  
Presume the things so sacred to profane ?

More fit it is t' adore, with humble mind,  
The image of the heavens in shape humane.

One of the shepherd boys wonders how simple Colin could ever gain audience of this mighty Princess. Colin replies, that he owed the opportunity to his friend the Shepherd of the Ocean ; but, that being once introduced to Court, even *his* unskilled notes seemed to give delight, doubtless because her noble nature measured their worth not by the standard of her own high thoughts, but by his humble condition.

The Shepherd of the Ocean (quoth he)  
 Unto that Goddess' grace me first enhanced,  
 And to mine oaten pipe inclined her ear,  
 That she thenceforth therein 'gan take delight,  
 And it desired at timely hours to hear,  
 All were my notes but rude and roughly dight;  
 For not by measure of her own great mind,  
 And wondrous worth, she mott\* my simple song,  
 But joyed that country shepherd ought could find  
 Worth hearkening to amongst the learned throng.

One of the shepherds asks if there were no others about the Court of Cynthia who could play upon the pipe. Thereupon Colin takes occasion to describe, under pastoral names, the various poets and men of letters then flourishing in England. These notices are not devoid of interest. But, in order to make them intelligible, more historical illustrations would be required than it would be discreet in this place to bestow. One of these notices has become especially celebrated. It is that in which Spenser is supposed to refer to Shakspeare under the name of *Ætion*. The lines are these:—

And there, though last not least, is *ÆTION*;  
 A gentler shepherd may nowhere be found:  
 Whose Muse, full of high thoughts' invention,  
 Doth like himself *heroically*† sound.

One of the shepherdesses interrupts Colin in ~~his~~ account of the distinguished poets and *men* at Court, and asks him if he has nothing to say about the beautiful *women*. From Colin's reply, it would seem as if Spenser still cherished his hopeless passion for the

\* *Mott* (past tense of *mete*), measured.

† *Heroically*, in allusion to the poet's name, which was then frequently printed *Shake-speare* (*hasti-vibrans*).

unknown Rosalind, celebrated in his Calendar fifteen years before.

Then spake a lovely lass, hight Lucida :

“ Shepherd, enough of shepherds thou hast told,  
Which favour thee, and honour Cynthia :

But of so many nymphs, which she doth hold  
In her retinue, thou hast nothing said ;

That seems, with none of them thou favour foundest,  
Or art ungrateful to each gentle maid,

That none of all their due deserts resoundest.”

Ah far be it (quoth Colin Clout) from me,

That I of gentle maids should ill deserve :  
For that myself I do profess to be

Vassal to one, whom all my days I serve ;  
The beam of beauty sparkled from above,

The flower of virtue and pure chastity,  
The blossom of sweet joy and perfect love,

The pearl of peerless grace and modesty :  
To her my thoughts I daily dedicate,

To her my heart I nightly martyrize :

To her my love I lowly do prostrate ;

To her my life I wholly sacrifice :

My thought, my heart, my love, my life is she.

Then thus Melissa said : “ Thrice happy maid,

Whom thou dost so enforce to deify :

That woods, and hills, and valleys thou hast made

Her name to echo unto heaven high.

But say, who *else* vouchsaféd thee of grace ?”

Melissa's inquiry gives Colin an opportunity to make in like manner complimentary notices of all his *female* friends at Court. I omit quotations from these, but cannot forbear to give at some length his renewed and impassioned eulogy of his queenly benefactor. If his language at times seems fulsome, we should in the first place remember the fashion of the

time; and secondly, we should not forget how deeply kindness sinks into the heart of true genius, and how warmly Spenser always speaks of those who had shown him kindness, even long after they were dead, and beyond the reach of flattery, or the power to serve.

More eath\* (quoth he) it is in such a case

How to begin, than know how to have done.

For every gift and every goodly meed,

Which she on me bestowed demands a day;

And every day in which she did a deed,

Demands a year it duly to display.

Her words were like a stream of honey fleeting,

The which doth softly trickle from the hive:

Able to melt the hearer's heart unweeting,

And eke to make the dead again alive.

Her deeds were like great clusters of ripe grapes,

Which load the bunches of the fruitful vine;

Offering to fall into each mouth that gapes,

And fill the same with store of timely wine.

Her looks were like beams of the morning sun,

Forth looking through the windows of the east,

When first the fleecy cattle have begun

Upon the pearléd grass to make their feast.

Her thoughts are like the fume of frankincense,

Which from a golden censer forth doth rise,

And throwing forth sweet odours mounts from thence

In rolling globes up to the vaulted skies.

There she beholds, with high-aspiring thought,

The cradle of her own creation,

Amongst the seats of angels heavenly wrought,

Much like an angel in all form and fashion.

Colin (said Cuddy then), thou hast forgot

Thyself, meseems, too much, to mount so high:

Such lofty flight base shepherd seemeth not,

From flocks and fields, to angels and to sky.

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\* *Eath*, easy.



True, (answered he) but her great excellence,  
Lifts me above the measure of my might :  
That, being filled with furious insolence,  
I feel myself like one yrap in sprite.  
For when I think of her, as oft I ought,  
Then want I words to speak it fitly forth :  
And, when I speak of her what I have thought,  
I cannot think according to her worth.  
Yet will I think of her, yet will I speak,  
So long as life my limbs doth hold together ;  
And, whenas death these vital bands shall break,  
Her name recorded I will leave forever.  
Her name in every tree I will endoss,  
That, as the trees do grow, her name may grow :  
And in the ground each where will it engross,  
And fill with stones, that all men may it know.  
The speaking woods, and murmuring waters' fall,  
Her name I'll teach in known terms to frame :  
And eke my lambs, when for their dams they call,  
I'll teach to call for Cynthia by name.  
And, long while after I am dead and rotten,  
Amongst the shepherds' daughters dancing round,  
My lays made of her shall not be forgotten,  
But sung by them with flowery garlands crowned.  
And ye, whoso ye be, that shall survive,  
Whenas ye hear her memory renewed,  
Be witness of her bounty here alive,  
Which she to Colin her poor shepherd shewed.

Thestylis, another shepherd, asks Colin why, seeing the Court of Cynthia contained so many noble persons, both men and women, and he himself was in so great favour, he did not remain. This leads Colin to utter, in a didactic form, sentiments similar to those which in Mother Hubbard's Tale he had spoken by way of satire, respecting the vanity of Court life. The sentiments in this part of the poem are general



in their application, and expressed with much beauty. In the end the shepherdesses think it shame that one who entertains such just and noble sentiments, and who had been so single-hearted and true in his attachment to Rosalind, should be by her so ill repaid. Colin makes a reply, remarkable not only for its beauty, but as it is the last time he recurs to the subject.

For she is not like as the other crew  
 Of shepherds' daughters which amongst you be,  
 But of divine regard and heavenly hue,  
 Excelling all that ever ye did see.  
 Not then to her that scornéd thing so base,  
 But to myself the blame that looked so high :  
 So high her thoughts as she herself have place,  
 And loathe each lowly thing with lofty eye.  
 Yet so much grace let her vouchsafe to grant  
 To simple swain, since her I may not love :  
 Yet that I may her honour paravant,\*  
 And praise her worth, though far my wit above.  
 Such grace shall be some guerdon for the grief,  
 And long affliction which I have endured :  
 Such grace sometimes shall give me some relief,  
 And ease of pain which cannot be recured.  
 And ye, my fellow-shepherds, which do see  
 And hear the languors of my too long dying,  
 Unto the world for ever witness be,  
 That hers I die, nought to the world denying,  
 This simple trophy of her great conquest.—

This is the last we hear of Rosalind.

As to the mechanical structure of the poem under consideration, it is in the common heroic ten-syllable line. The lines however rhyme, not in couplets, but in quatrains. There is also one peculiarity in the rhyme that seems to be in imitation of Chaucer. A

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\* *Paravant*, publicly.

paragraph often ends with an unfinished rhyme, that is, with a word the rhyme to which must be sought in the next paragraph, even where a new subject is begun. An instance of this occurs at the close of the passage last quoted. The rhyme to "conquest" is in the following paragraph, which, as it introduces something entirely new, we have not quoted.

The poem is of considerable size, containing nine hundred and fifty-five lines. A pretty fair opinion of its merits and its general character may be formed from the passages which have been quoted. These, it is hoped, have been such as to give the reader no ground of regret that "*Colin Clout came home again.*"

ASTROPHEL AND OTHER ELEGIES. The quarto volume of 1595, containing the poem just noticed, contained also several other poems. These were a collection of elegiac pieces, in honour of the gallant Sir Philip Sidney. Only one of them is by Spenser. It is entitled "Astrophel, a pastoral elegy upon the death of the most noble and valorous knight, Sir Philip Sidney," and dedicated to the most beautiful and virtuous lady, the Countess of Essex. Astrophel is a poem of two hundred and sixteen lines, and is a beautiful tribute of affection to the memory of his friend.

This completes my account of the quarto volume of 1595. From the nature of its contents, it must have been at the time of its publication, a volume likely to excite a lively interest.

It was followed the same year by another volume in duodecimo, entitled "*Amoretti and Epithalamium*;

written not long since, by Edmund Spenser." Of this volume I proceed to give some account.

THE SONNETS. The reader may recollect the closing passage of "Colin Clout's come Home again," and the remark then made, that this is the last we hear of Rosalind. The reason of his subsequent silence is perhaps already conjectured. Although Colin had ceased entirely to hope, he might, nevertheless, to the end of his days, have continued to admire and celebrate the beautiful ice-palace who had dazzled his imagination. But an intervening object is revealed to us in the poems now under consideration. The author of the Fairy Queen, whose first step on entering life was to fall in love, whose first poem was in honour of the capricious boy, whose warm imagination were enough to melt an iceberg, who had been now fifteen years an author, and highly distinguished as such, found at last, in the zenith of his fame, and at the age of forty, his first response from the female heart.

Unfortunately not much is known respecting the woman who made Spenser forget the cold and haughty Rosalind. He calls her, in his Sonnets, ELIZABETH, and uses certain expressions which lead to the conjecture that she was the daughter of a merchant, belonging to what in England is called the middle class of society. We know nothing of this portion of his history, except as it is revealed to us in his Sonnets. From these it would seem that he made, for a time, the acquisition of Elizabeth his sole business. Books and friends were alike neglected, and his whole head and heart were filled with the noble woman to whom we owe some of his loftiest inspirations. The period of

his courtship was employed in writing sonnets to her and of her; and immediately after his marriage, he wrote his immortal Epithalamium in celebration of that joyous event. The Sonnets and the Epithalamium compose the volume under consideration.

Without entering into any discussion of the disputed points relating to the character of the Sonnet, and the rank which it ought to hold among the various forms of poetry, I am probably safe in presuming that the Sonnets of Spenser will not be neglected by any one desirous of tracing the personal history of such a man, through one of the most critical points in the solution of the great problem of human life. These Sonnets bear internal evidences of being arranged in chronological order, that is, in the order of the time of their composition. Whatever be their faults, they bear the strongest evidence, also, of being a true impress of the mind of the author. They are the fresh coinage of the heart. They are a faithful record, from day to day, of the hidden life of a man of genius, under circumstances that agitate the secret waters of the soul to their lowest depths. I repeat, therefore, the Sonnets of Spenser can never be neglected by any one who desires to know the true character and history of the man. They will not, however, prove entertaining except to him who approaches them as a student. To seize the varying shades of character as they are here developed, to collect, arrange, and group them into one consistent and harmonious picture, would of itself require a separate chapter. I am obliged therefore to pass them by with merely the general remark already made.

The Sonnets are termed by Spenser "Amoretti," and



are eighty-eight in number. They begin in a very desponding tone, which continues through more than half of the collection. Towards the close there are evident symptoms of the lady's having relented. This is followed by various alternations of fear and hope, the latter gradually increasing, and growing at length into joy and rapture, and finally ending in almost a frenzy of delight. Taken as a whole, and in connexion with their history, the Sonnets are an eloquent commentary on the character both of the man that penned, and the woman that inspired them.

**EPITHALAMIUM.** The Epithalamium, or ode in celebration of his marriage, is a fit sequel to the Sonnets. As the Sonnets show the state of his mind while a suitor, so the Epithalamium shows his state of mind when success had crowned his efforts, and the suit was won.

The Epithalamium is irregular in its versification, and in that respect well suited to the varying and almost tumultuous emotions which it was intended to express. It consists of four hundred and thirty-three lines arranged in stanzas. These stanzas are not entirely uniform either in length or structure, but average about eighteen lines. Each stanza contains a particular scene or act in the history of that one eventful day. These scenes commence with the rising at early dawn, and go through with the bridal array, the procession along the streets, the entrance into the church, the nuptial ceremony, the return home, and finally the evening banquet. In no poem has Spenser shown such ease and beauty in his transitions. The imagination of the reader passes from scene to scene with a graceful movement, hardly inferior to the



changing visions of a dream. I quote only one of these scenes, that describing the nuptial ceremony in the church. More extended extracts are not deemed necessary, as the poem has lately found its way into some of our most popular school books.

Behold, while she before the altar stands,  
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,  
And blesseth her with his two happy hands,  
How the red roses flush up in her cheeks,  
And the pure snow, with goodly vermeil stain,  
Like crimson dyed in grain ;

That even the angels, which continually  
About the sacred altar do remain,  
Forget their service and about her fly,  
Oft peeping in her face, that seems more fair,  
The more they on it stare.

But her sad eyes, still fastened on the ground,  
Are governéd with goodly modesty,  
That suffers not a look to glance awry,

Which may let in a little thought unsound.  
Why blush you, love, to give to me your hand,  
The pledge of all your band ?

Sing, ye sweet angels, alleluya sing,  
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

The Epithalamium is probably the best known of all of Spenser's minor poems. It is acknowledged to be the noblest spousal verse in the language. To say that it is embellished with art, and even instinct with genius, is, however, robbing it of its chief glory. It is the nobleness of the sentiments which makes its great attraction. It is easy, as it is common, to sue for favours, and to repine in their absence, and to be eloquent in our suits and our complaints ;—but the surest mark of greatness in human character, is the disposition and the ability suitably to appreciate what

we have—that largeness of heart which can take in the full measure of a present happiness—that generous outpouring of affection in Spenser's Epithalamium to his wife, which gives meaning and propriety to the most extravagant expressions towards the Elizabeth of his Sonnets. We admire, not so much the poet, as THE MAN. The only wonder is, that such a man could have found, among the haughtiest Peeresses of England, a *Rosalind*!

OTHER WORKS. After his marriage, nothing is known of Spenser until the year 1596, when he went to London with three additional books of the Fairy Queen. These were printed, with a reprint of the former three. During the same year appeared also his PROTHALAMIUM, in connexion with a reprint of his Daphnaida. Prothalamium means a song in honour of a marriage yet to be, as Epithalamium means one in honour of a marriage that is past. The Prothalamium was in reference, not to his own marriage, but to the expected marriage of two noble ladies of his acquaintance, the Countesses of Cumberland and Warwick. This poem is exquisitely rhythmical and graceful, but incomplete in plan, and wanting in that noble enthusiasm which characterizes the Epithalamium. During this same year, 1596, he published another volume, containing four Hymns, the first two in honour of Love and Beauty, written, as he says, in the raw conceit of his youth, the other two in honour of *Heavenly* Love and Beauty, written to counteract, by their more serious air, any appearance of levity which might appertain to the earlier productions. These four Hymns are of about equal length. They

are in seven line stanzas, and contain in all one hundred and sixty-nine stanzas, or eleven hundred and eighty-three lines.

There are among his works four short Poems, without title, in the Anacreontic style, eighty-two lines in all, which appear to have been written about this time; also four additional Sonnets to different individuals.

During this same year, 1596, while in London, he wrote, or at least finished, a prose work, entitled "A View of the State of Ireland, dialogue-wise, between Eudoxus and Irenæus." This treatise was not published till many years after his death. There were also published after his death two unfinished Cantos in continuation of the Fairy Queen. They are entitled "Mutability," and are supposed to form a part of the Legend of Constancy. This completes the list of his works, of all of which I have given some distinct account, except the Fairy Queen. That is reserved for separate consideration.

The sequel of the poet's life is of a melancholy nature. The Englishmen, Raleigh, Spenser, and others, who had been put in possession of the forfeited estates of certain rebels among the Irish nobility, were almost necessarily unpopular with the conquered peasantry. The irritation which existed on this account had been gradually increasing, and became at length so great that in October, 1598, it broke out into open rebellion. The insurgents, for some cause not well understood, perhaps without special cause, appear to have been particularly incensed towards Spenser. They attacked Kilcolman, and having robbed and plundered the castle, set fire to it. Spenser and his wife escaped; but, sad to relate, either in the confusion incidental to

such a calamity, or from inability to render assistance, a new-born infant child was left behind and perished in the flames. Having obtained, as it is supposed, temporary refuge for his wife and two remaining children, he proceeded to London. There, after three months of the most painful anxiety, impoverished and broken-hearted, on the 16th of January, 1598, at the age of 45, he died at an obscure tavern in King Street.

Spenser was buried, at his own request, near the tomb of Chaucer, in Westminster Abbey. His funeral was at the expense of the Earl of Essex. The pall was held by brother poets. Mournful elegies and poems, together with the pens that wrote them, were thrown into his grave. The Queen, it is said, ordered a monument to his memory. It is also said, that this act of grace was prevented from being carried into effect, by the same penny-wise Councillor who had intercepted so many other marks of her Majesty's favour. It was reserved, however, to *woman* to show him dead the favour for which alive he so long sued in vain. Thirty years after his death, the celebrated Ann, Countess of Dorset, erected a suitable monument to his memory in the venerable Abbey, where his remains still repose.





THE FAIRY QUEEN.



A

## SPECIAL EXPOSITION

OF

# THE FAIRY QUEEN.

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## BOOK I.

THE LEGEND OF THE RED-CROSS KNIGHT, OR OF HOLINESS.

The Opening Scene—The Wandering Wood—Adventure with Error—Archimago—The Hermitage—Magic—The False Dream—Saint George and Una Separated—Battle of Saint George and Sansfoy—Fidessa—The Bleeding Trees—Una and the Lion—Corceca and Kirkrapine—Archimago under the Guise of Saint George—Sansloy and Una—Saint George in the House of Pride—Battle with Sansjoy—Una in Awful Danger—Rescued by the Fauns and Satyrs—Saint George made Captive by Orgoglio—Interposition of Prince Arthur—Cave of Despair—Argument for Suicide—House of Holiness—Final Adventure—Plan of the Poem shown by Synthesis.

THE reader, on opening the first canto of the Fairy Queen, is presented with a scene of extraordinary beauty. He sees a plain which, however, is not described. The poet's attention, as well as the reader's, is attracted by the appearance of the interesting group who are crossing it.

A GENTLE KNIGHT was pricking on the plain,  
Yclad in mighty arms and silver shield,

Wherein old dints of deep wounds did remain,  
 The cruel marks of many a bloody field ;  
 Yet arms till that time did he never wield :  
 His angry steed did chide his foaming bit,  
 As much disdainig to the curb to yield :  
 Full jolly knight he seemed, and fair did sit,  
 As one for knightly jousts and fierce encounters fit.

And on his breast a bloody cross he bore,  
 The dear remembrance of his dying Lord,  
 For whose sweet sake that glorious badge he wore,  
 And dead, as living ever, him adored : \  
 Upon his shield the like was also scored,  
 For sovereign hope, which in his help he had.  
 Right, faithful, true he was in deed and word ;  
 But of his cheer did seem too solemn sad ;  
 Yet nothing did he dread, but ever was ydrad.\*

A lovely LADY rode him fair beside,  
 Upon a lowly ass more white than snow ;  
 Yet she much whiter ; but the same did hide  
 Under a veil, that wimpled was full low :  
 And over all a black stole she did throw :  
 As one that inly mourned, so was she sad,  
 And heavy sat upon her palfrey slow ;  
 Seeméd in heart some hidden care she had ;  
 And by her in a line a milk-white lamb she lad.

So pure and innocent, as that same lamb,  
 She was in life and every virtuous lore ;  
 And by descent from royal lineage came  
 Of ancient kings and queens, that had of yore  
 Their sceptres stretched from east to western shore,  
 And all the world in their subjection held.

\* \* \* \* \*

Behind her far away a DWARF did lag,  
 That lazy seemed, in being ever last,  
 Or weariéd with bearing of her bag  
 Of needments at his back.

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\* *Ydrad*, dreaded.

† *Lad*, led.

In what part of the world this occurs we are not told, nor do we care. The spell is upon us, and we see the vision that has been conjured up. It is before us—*there*, where the “gentle knight is pricking on the plain.” The lady is named Una. She is sorrowful, and not without cause. Her father’s kingdom lies ravaged by a horrible monster. She has come a long distance to the Court of Gloriana, Queen of Fairy Land, to ask aid. Gloriana has assigned the task of aiding her and destroying the monster to this noble Knight. The Knight (named St. George) has set out on this expedition, and he and the lady, with their strange attendant, are on their way towards her father’s dominions, when we first see them “pricking on the plain.”

We are led to suppose it is a long way the Knight has to go before he will meet his great foe, that dragon “horrible and stern” who ravages the fair fields of Una’s father. Long before he reaches that monster, whose destruction is to be his principal achievement, he may meet with minor adventures, or mishaps—possibly may fall a victim on the way and never accomplish the object of his mission. In fact, we have hardly time to examine attentively this interesting and curious group, before an adventure occurs, which completely engrosses our attention, and puts an end to further speculation. The heavens are overcast, and a sudden shower of rain obliges the riders to seek shelter in a neighbouring grove—

Whose lofty trees, yclad with summer’s pride,  
Did spread so broad, that heaven’s light did hide,  
Not pierceable with power of any star ;



And all within were paths and alleys wide,  
With footing worn, and leading inward far.

So dense is the forest, so thick the foliage overhead in the tops of the trees (although free from under-wood and easy to ride through), that the rain scarcely penetrated it, and the birds, gay and musical, "seemed in their song to scorn the cruel sky." Who would not love to beguile the way, "until the blustering storm is overblown," in wandering through this noble forest?

The sailing pine ; the cedar proud and tall ;  
The vine-prop elm ; the poplar never dry ;  
The builder oak, sole king of forests all ;  
The aspen, good for staves ; the cypress funeral ;

The laurel, meed of mighty conquerors  
And poets sage ; the fir, that weepeth still ;  
The willow, worn of forlorn paramours ;  
The yew, obedient to the bender's will ;  
The birch for shafts ; the sallow for the mill ;  
The myrrh, sweet bleeding in the bitter wound ;  
The warlike beech ; the ash for nothing ill ;  
The fruitful olive ; and the platane round ;  
The carver holme ; the maple, seldom inward sound.

But, it is easier to penetrate the windings of such an inviting labyrinth, than to retrace one's steps when once entered. No wonder that when the shower was past, the inconsiderate wanderers could not recall the paths by which they had come.

Led with delight, they thus beguile the way,  
Until the blustering storm is overblown ;  
When, weening to return whence they did stray,  
They cannot find that path, which first was shown,  
But wander to and fro in ways unknown,  
Farthest from end then, when they nearest ween,

That makes them doubt their wits be not their own :  
 So many paths, so many turnings seen,  
 That, which of them to take, in diverse doubt they been.

At last resolving forward still to fare,  
 Till that some end they find, or in or out,  
 That path they take, that beaten seemed most bare,  
 And like to lead the labyrinth about ;  
 Which when by tract they hunted had throughout,  
 At length it brought them to a hollow cave,  
 Amid the thickest woods. The champion stout  
 Eftsoons\* dismounted from his courser brave,  
 And to the Dwarf a while his needless spear he gave.

“Be well aware,” quoth then that Lady mild,  
 “Lest sudden mischief ye too rash provoke :  
 The danger hid, the place unknown and wild,  
 Breeds dreadful doubts : oft fire is without smoke,  
 And peril without show : therefore your stroke,  
 Sir Knight, withhold, till further trial made.”  
 “Ah, Lady,” said he, “shame were to revoke  
 The forward footing for an hidden shade :  
 Virtue gives herself light through darkness for to wad

“Yea but,” quoth she, “the peril of this place  
 I better wot than you : Though now too late  
 To wish you back return with foul disgrace,  
 Yet wisdom warns, whilst foot is in the gate,  
 To stay the step, ere forcéd to retrate.  
 This is the Wandering Wood, this ERROR’s den,  
 A monster vile, whom God and man does hate :  
 Therefore I read, beware.” “Fly, fly,” quoth then  
 The fearful Dwarf ; “this is no place for living men.

But, full of fire and greedy hardiment,  
 The youthful Knight could not for ought be staid ;  
 But forth unto the darksome hole he went,  
 And lookéd in : his glistening armour made  
 A little glooming light, much like a shade ;

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\* *Eftsoons*, immediately.

By which he saw the ugly monster plain,  
 Half like a serpent horribly displayed,\*  
 But th' other half did woman's shape retain,  
 Most loathsome, filthy, foul, and full of vile disdain.

And, as she lay upon the dirty ground,  
 Her huge long tail, her den all overspread,  
 Yet was in knots and many bouts upwound,  
 Pointed with mortal sting : Of her there bred  
 A thousand young ones, which she daily fed,  
 Sucking upon her poisonous dugs ; each one  
 Of sundry shapes, yet all ill-favouréd :  
 Soon as that uncouth light upon them shone,  
 Into her mouth they crept, and sudden all were gone.

Their dam upstart,† out of her den effrayed,‡  
 And rushéd forth, hurling her hideous tail  
 About her cursed head ; whose folds displayed  
 Were stretched now forth at length without entrail.§

The Champion of Truth, nothing daunted by this formidable shape, boldly commences the assault, and deals her a blow that seems sufficient to put at once an end to her existence. *But mere force and courage are not the only qualities necessary to combat Error.*

Much daunted with that dint her sense was dazed :  
 Yet kindling rage herself she gathered round,  
 And all at once her beastly body raised  
 With doubled forces high above the ground :  
 Then, wrapping up her wreathéd stern around,  
 Lept fierce upon his shield, and her huge train  
 All suddenly about his body wound,  
 That hand or foot to stir he strove in vain.  
*God help the man so wrapt in Error's endless train !*

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\* *Displayed* (dis, plico), unfolded, not coiled up, stretched out. † *Upstart*, started up. ‡ *Effrayed* (affrayed, afraid), alarmed, frightened. § *Without entrail*, not trailed up, untwisted.

His Lady, sad to see his sore constraint,  
Cried out, "Now, now, Sir Knight, show what ye be;  
Add *faith* unto your force, and be not faint;  
Strangle her, else she sure will strangle thee."  
That when he heard, in great perplexity,  
His gall did grate for grief and high disdain;  
And, knitting all his force, got one hand free,  
Wherewith he gript her gorge with so great pain,  
That soon to loose her wicked bands did her constrain.

Such is an outline of the Knight's first adventure. Error is slain, and her miserable brood are destroyed. But the Chàmpion of Truth has had a desperate struggle, nor did he finally succeed till faith was added to his force, and courage was tempered with discretion. Happy is he if he does not forget the warning it should give him.

Having overcome this loathsome beast and found their way out of the wood, the party resume their journey. Towards night they fall in with an old man of venerable aspect, a HERMIT to all appearance.

At length they chanced to meet upon the way  
An aged Sire, in long black weeds yelad,  
His feet all bare, his beard all hoary gray,  
And by his belt his book he hanging had;  
Sober he seemed, and very sagely sad;  
And to the ground his eyes were lowly bent,  
Simple in show, and void of malice bad;  
And all the way he prayéd, as he went,  
And often knocked his breast, as one that did repent.

They accept the old man's hospitable invitation, and spend the night in his humble cell.

A little lowly hermitage it was,  
Down in a dale, hard by a forest's side,  
Far from resort of people that did pass

In travel to and fro :—a little wide  
There was a holy chapel edified  
Wherein the Hermit duly wont to say  
His holy things each morn and eventide :  
Thereby a crystal stream did gently play,  
Which from a sacred fountain welléd forth alway.

Arrivéd there, the little house they fill,  
Ne look for entertainment where none was ;  
Rest is their feast, and all things at their will :  
The noblest mind the best contentment has.  
With fair discourse the evening so they pass ;  
For that old man of pleasing words had store,  
And well could file his tongue, as smooth as glass :  
He told of saints and popes, and evermore  
He strowed an *Ave-Mary* after and before.

The reader has no doubt already suspected the character of this pretended Hermit. He is a wicked and potent magician, named ARCHIMAGO. His foul machinations commence as soon as the travellers are asleep.

There, when all drowned in deadly sleep he finds,  
He to his study goes ; and there amidst  
His magic books, and arts of sundry kinds,  
He seeks out mighty charms to trouble sleepy minds.

Then choosing out few words most horrible,  
(Let none them read !) thereof did verses frame ;  
With which, and other spells like terrible,  
He bade awake black Pluto's grisly dame :  
And curséd heaven ; and spake reproachful shame  
Of highest God, the Lord of life and light.  
*A bold bad man !* that dared to call by name  
Great Gorgon, prince of darkness and dead night ;  
At which Cocytus quakes, and Styx is put to flight.

And forth he called out of deep darkness dread  
Legions of Sprites, the which, like little flies,



Fluttering about his ever damnéd head,  
Await whereto their service he applies,  
To aid his friends, or fray his enemies ;  
Of those he chose out two, the falsest two,  
And fittest for to forge true-seeming lies ;  
The one of them he gave a message to,  
The other by himself staid other work to do.

One of the Spirits thus invoked is sent as a messenger to the cave of Morpheus, somewhere in the interior of the earth, to procure a Dream. The episode describing the house of Morpheus is highly poetical, but must be passed over. While the first Spirit is gone to bring a Dream, Archimago by his magic arts fashions the other into the shape and appearance of the Lady Una, so like that no one by the eye alone could know the difference.

He all this while, with charms and hidden arts,  
Had made a Lady of that other Sprite,  
And framed of liquid air her tender parts,  
So lively, and so like in all men's sight,  
That weaker sense it could have ravished quite :  
The maker's self, for all his wondrous wit,  
Was nigh beguiléd with so goodly sight.  
Her all in white he clad, and over it  
Cast a black stole, most like to seem for Una fit.

Having thus transformed one Spirit, and received by the hands of the other a false Dream, he proceeds with his machinations against his victims. By means of the false Dream, loose imaginations are conveyed to the mind of the sleeping Knight. When the latter awakes, the influence of the foul Dream upon his mind is seconded by the light conduct of one whom he supposes to be the Lady Una, but whom the reader

knows to be a false and foul Spirit. The Knight, though he penetrates not the devices of the adversary, is yet proof against his assaults. It only grieves him that he is to peril his life for so light a dame.

The night is now nearly spent, and these two wicked Spirits, having failed to taint the pure mind of the Knight, report their ill success to their master, Archimago. Thereupon he tries another scheme. The pretended Una retains her false appearance, and the Dream-Spirit is transformed into the shape and appearance of a gay young *Squire*. Archimago, having everything in readiness, rushes to the apartment of Saint George, and wakens him in haste. The Knight, under the guidance of this "bold bad man," is conducted to another apartment, where he sees, as he supposes, the guilt of the Lady Una—a guilt, which he is the more ready to believe because of her light behaviour towards himself that same night. He draws his sword upon the guilty couple, but is restrained by Archimago. Disgusted, indignant, the Knight in an evil hour determines to desert the Lady, for whose sake he has undertaken this dangerous enterprise. At earliest dawn, therefore, he calls the Dwarf, and departs with the utmost secrecy and speed.

But the lovely Lady Una, that pure, heavenly-minded damsel, who all this eventful night had been sleeping with the calm repose of trusting innocence—what is to become of her?

The royal Virgin shook off drowsyhed :  
And, rising forth out of her baser bower,  
Looked for her Knight, who far away was fled,

And for her Dwarf, that wont to wait each hour ;—  
Then gan she wail and weep to see that woful stour.\*

And after him she rode with so much speed,  
As her slow beast could make ; but all in vain :  
For him so far had borne his light-foot steed,  
Prickéd with wrath and fiery fierce disdain,  
That him to follow was but fruitless pain :  
Yet she her weary limbs would never rest ;  
But every hill and dale, each wood and plain,  
Did search, sore grievéd in her gentle breast,  
He so ungently left her, whom she lovéd best.

Archimago then has succeeded, so far at least as to  
separate the Lady from her appointed champion.  
Henceforward, for many a weary day, their journeys  
and adventures will be separate. Let us follow first  
the deceived Knight.

The true Saint George was wandered far away,  
Still flying from his thoughts and jealous fear :  
Will was his guide, and grief led him astray.  
At last him chanced to meet upon the way  
A faithless Saracen, all armed to point,  
In whose great shield was writ with letters gay  
SANSFOY ; full large of limb and every joint  
He was, and caréd not for God or man a point.

He had a fair companion of his way,  
A goodly Lady clad in scarlet red,  
Purfled with gold and pearl of rich assay ;  
And like a Persian mitre on her head  
She wore, with crowns and ouches garnishéd,  
The which her lavish lovers to her gave :  
Her wanton palfrey all was overspread  
With tinsel trappings, woven like a wave,  
Whose bridle rung with golden bells and bosses brave.

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\* *Stour*, stir, trouble.

With fair disport, and courting dalliance,  
She entertained her lover all the way :  
But when she saw the Knight his spear advance,  
She soon left off her mirth and wanton play,  
And bade her Knight address him to the fray ;  
His foe was nigh at hand.

Then follows one of those knightly encounters, in the description of which Spenser has such a remarkable power. The issue of this, however, is not doubtful. Saint George conquers Sansfoy (without faith), the Saracen, and then addresses himself to the richly attired lady, his companion. She declares her name to be *Fidessa* (faithful). She pretends also to be the daughter of an emperor, and betrothed to a young prince, who had died in the flower of his age, leaving her broken-hearted and disconsolate. She was by mishap carried off by this cruel, faithless *Sansfoy*. Such was her pitiful story. "Pity melts to love." Alas! for our Knight. The fresh flush of victory, the melting of compassion, the supposed faithlessness and levity of the woman who of all the world has been trusted as pure and true—these are not the circumstances which are apt to lead to a well-considered action of the understanding. *Fidessa's* story ends thus :

"In this sad plight, friendless, unfortunate,  
Now miserable I *Fidessa* dwell,  
Craving of you, in pity of my state,  
To do none ill, if please ye not do well."  
He in great passion all this while did dwell,  
More busying his quick eyes, her face to view,  
Than his dull ears, to hear what she did tell ;  
And said, "Fair lady, heart of flint would rue  
The undeservéd woes and sorrows, which ye shew.



Henceforth in safe assurance may ye rest,  
 Having both found a new friend you to aid,  
 And lost an old foe that did you molest:  
 Better new friend than an old foe is said."  
 With change of cheer the seeming-simple maid  
 Let fall her eyes, as shamefast, to the earth,  
 And yielding soft, in that she nought gainsaid.  
 So forth they rode, he feigning seemly mirth,  
 And she coy looks: so dainty, they say, maketh dearth.

Saint George and his new acquaintance, Fidessa, journey forth until high noon, when they seek the friendly shelter of two wide-spreading trees. While reposing beneath the shade of these trees, the Knight thinks to please his companion by making a fresh garland for her dainty forehead. For this purpose he plucks a bough. Imagine his horror, when the wounded tree drops blood, and utters a piercing shriek! The apparent tree is an unfortunate knight, Fradubio, and the fellow tree is his lady-love, both thus changed through the machinations of a wicked sorceress, named DUESSA. The miserable Fradubio had been subjected to the power of the hag, and changed into the appearance of a tree (though retaining the sensations of humanity), as a penalty for having allowed himself to entertain unworthy sentiments of his lady. For this offence he had been imposed upon by the foul hag Duessa, who had made herself appear in his eyes as an "angel of light;" but chancing upon a time to see her when the charm was off, he found out her real character and appearance.

"A filthy foul old woman I did view,  
 That ever to have touched her, I did rue."

Duessa, at last discovered, and finding she could no



longer hope to impose upon Fradubio, exerted her magic power to change him and his true lady into these two trees. The male tree, whose bleeding limbs had been torn, ends his tale by exhorting Saint George to be cautious in regard to appearances, and to beware of falling by the machinations of this same false Duessa, who is still abroad in the world. Saint George listens with horror to the words of the bleeding tree, and resolves to take its advice and flee from this dangerous place. On turning to his companion, the pretended Fidessa, he finds her in a swoon. Still unsuspecting, he raises her from the ground, and having reassured her spirits from her feigned fright, he again sets forward on his journey.

It is now near the close of the day succeeding that eventful night at the Hermitage. Leaving Saint George and his companion, whom the reader understands to be none other than the false Duessa herself, to travel for a while together, let us return to the Hermitage and see what became of Una.

One day, nigh weary of the irksome way,  
 From her unhasty beast she did alight;  
 And on the grass her dainty limbs did lay  
 In secret shadow, far from all men's sight;  
 From her fair head her fillet she undight,  
 And laid her stole aside: Her angel's face,  
 As the great eye of heaven, shined bright,  
 And made a sunshine in the shady place;  
 Did never mortal eye behold such heavenly grace.

It fortunéd, out of the thickest wood  
 A ramping Lion rushéd suddenly,  
 Hunting full greedy after savage blood:  
 Soon as the royal Virgin he did spy,  
 With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,

To have at once devoured her tender corse :  
 But to the prey when as he drew more nigh,  
 His bloody rage assuagéd with remorse,  
 And, with the sight amazed, forgot his furious force.

Instead thereof he kissed her weary feet,  
 And licked her lily hands with fawning tongue ;  
 As he her wrongéd innocence did weet.  
 O how can beauty master the most strong,  
 And simple truth subdue avenging wrong !  
 Whose yielded pride and proud submission\*  
 Still dreading death, when she had markéd long,  
 Her heart gan melt in great compassion ;  
 And drizzling tears did shed for pure affection !

“The lion, lord of every beast in field,”  
 Quoth she, “his princely puissance† doth abate,  
 And mighty proud to humble weak does yield,  
 Forgetful of the hungry rage, which late  
 Him pricked, in pity of my sad estate :—  
 But he, my lion, and my noble lord,  
 How does he find in cruel heart to hate  
 Her, that him loved, and ever most adored  
 As the god of my life ? why hath he me abhorred ?”

Redounding tears did choke th’ end of her plaint,  
 Which softly echoed from the neighbour wood ;  
 And, sad to see her sorrowful constraint,  
 The kingly beast upon her gazing stood ;  
 With pity calmed, down fell his angry mood.  
 At last, in close heart shutting up her pain,  
 Arose the Virgin born of heavenly brood,  
 And to her snowy palfrey got again,  
 To seek her strayed Champion if she might attain.

---

\* *Submission*, &c. In these cases, Spenser pronounces the termination *ion* as a dissyllable, *submiss-i-on*, with the accent on the last. † *Puissance*, pronounced by Spenser sometimes as a trisyllable, *pu-iss-ance*, and sometimes (as here), as a dissyllable with the *i* silent, *puiss-ance*.

The lion would not leave her desolate,  
 But with her went along, as a strong guard  
 Of her chaste person, and a faithful mate  
 Of her sad troubles and misfortunes hard :  
 Still, when she slept, he kept both watch and ward ;  
 And, when she waked, he waited diligent,  
 With humble service to her will prepared :  
 From her fair eyes he took commandément,  
 And ever by her looks conceivéd her intent.

Towards night Una discovers a cottage inhabited by an old woman named Corceca (superstition), and her daughter Abessa (ignorance). Here Una lodges for the night, guarded by her noble-hearted companion.

The day is spent ; and cometh drowsy night,  
 When every creature shrouded is in sleep :  
 Sad Una down her lays in weary plight,  
 And at her feet the lion watch doth keep :  
 Instead of rest, she does lament, and weep,  
 For the late loss of her dear-lovéd Knight,  
 And sighs, and groans, and evermore does steep  
 Her tender breast in bitter tears all night ;  
 All night she thinks too long, and often looks for light.

During the night, a guilty accomplice of Corceca, a bold, blustering fellow, called Kirkrapine, comes to the cottage and commences his pranks, but receives his quietus from the paw of our honest friend Leo. *Power is of right the guardian of innocence.* The following day the noble beast continues to protect the distressed lady.

Now when broad day the world discovered has,  
 Up Una rose, up rose the lion eke ;  
 And on their former journey forward pass,  
 In ways unknown, her wandering Knight to seek,

With pains far passing that long-wandering Greek,  
 That for his love refuséd deity :  
 Such were the labours of this lady meek,  
 Still seeking him, that from her still did fly ;  
 Then furthest from her hope, when most she weenéd nigh.

But now comes her severest trial. During this day she sees not far off a noble knight approaching. His shield bears the well-remembered emblem, and on a nearer approach, she sees it is indeed her own dear knight, Saint George. Such at least the lady supposes him to be, although the reader knows it to be the false Archimago, dressed and framed to appear like the Red-Cross Knight. *The subtle magician, who in regard to the person of a lover, can deceive a woman's eyes, will not lack words to deceive her wit.* Poor Una ! She receives good and sufficient reasons for her lover's temporary absence, and she is too happy at his return to refuse belief to that which satisfies her heart, if not her head.

His lovely words her seemed due recompense  
 Of all her passéd pains : one loving hour  
 For many years of sorrow can dispense ;  
*A dram of sweet is worth a pound of sour.*  
 She has forgot how many a woful stour  
 For him she late endured ; she speaks no more  
 Of past : true is, that true love hath no power  
 ✓ To lookén back ; his eyes be fixed before.  
 Before her stands her Knight, for whom she toiled so sore.

Supposing, therefore, that she had in truth found her own good Knight, she goes on to recount her adventures since their separation. But soon a new foe appears. Bold and cruel Sansloy, brother of the Sansfoy who had been slain, meets and attacks them. The



encounter is very much like that between Sansfoy and the real Saint George, except in its result. The false Saint George is unhorsed, and Sansloy is about to slay him, when removing the visor, behold, to the amazement both of the Saracen and the lady, a wrinkled, feeble old man—Archimago, stripped of all disguise. Una has hardly time to rejoice at her escape from this fearful danger, before a new and more imminent one stares her in the face—that, namely, of falling into the hands of this rude and lawless unbeliever! Sansloy leaves the old magician to die or recover, as it might happen, and directs his ill-boding attentions to his beauteous prize. Taking her rudely from her palfrey, he is attacked by the brave and faithful lion. But mere honesty and simple-minded courage are not always a match for bold and practised villany. The glittering Damascus blade drinks the heart's-blood of the noble beast, and the lady is at the mercy of an insulting and godless foe. But the thought of sin or disloyalty hath not yet entered her pure breast, and the reader never for one moment entertains a doubt about her safety!

+ We are far from feeling the same confidence in the safe condition of her appointed Champion. The thought of sin and falsehood, though injected by foul means into his mind, has yet left a taint there. He has not indeed yielded to crime; but he has no longer the talisman of innocence to disenchant the foul spirits that are seeking to beguile him to his ruin. Let us follow him once more.

Saint George is led by Duessa into scenes suited to the designs which she had upon him. They are seen to approach a splendid palace, the abode of a royal



queen, LUCIFERA, otherwise called Pride, whose gentleman usher is Vanity. The throne and state of Pride are painted with all that splendour of embellishment in which the genius of Spenser revels. Omitting this description, let us follow the fortunes of our Champion.

While he and Duessa were in attendance at the sumptuous and glittering court of Lucifera, once upon a day, among the throng, another Knight, a new-comer, appeared, bearing

A heathenish shield, wherein with letters red,  
Was writ, SANSJOY.

This blood-thirsty Saracen, a brother of the two already celebrated, is enraged beyond bounds when he sees among the press the Red-Cross Knight, bearing the arms of the conquered Sansfoy. A challenge ensues, and the next day a public combat takes place in presence of the Queen and court. The struggle is desperate. Sansjoy at length is conquered, but the body, by the magic arts of Duessa, is secretly spirited away; and Saint George, though victorious, is sorely wounded.

Leaving the Red-Cross Knight to recover of his wounds under the doubtful attendance of his nurse Duessa, in one of the chambers of the House of Pride, let us inquire once more after Una. We find her indeed, as we left her, at an awful crisis of her fate. In the midst of a wild and trackless forest, the godless infidel snatches away her veil, and looks with unhallowed eye upon her pure face. There is a stage in human depravity in which even innocence seems only to harden the heart and provoke the beholder to

outrage. Una utters a piercing shriek. But who is there to hear it in that lone and impenetrable forest? —Does thy faith fail thee, gentle reader?

ETERNAL PROVIDENCE, exceeding thought,  
Where none appears, can make herself a way !  
A wondrous way it for this Lady wrought,  
From lion's claws to pluck the gripéd prey.  
Her shrill outeries and shrieks so loud did bray,  
That all the woods and forests did resound :  
A troupe of Fauns and Satyrs far away  
Within the wood were dancing in a round,  
Whilst old Sylvanus slept in shady arbour sound :

Who, when they heard that piteous strained voice,  
In haste forsook their rural merriment,  
And ran towards the far-rebounded noise,  
To weet what wight so loudly did lament.  
Unto the place they come incontinent :  
Whom when the raging Saracen espied,  
A rude, misshapen, monstrous rabblement,  
Whose like he never saw, he durst not bide,  
But got his ready steed, and fast away 'gan ride.

The wild woodgods, arrivéd in the place,  
There find the Virgin, doleful, desolate,  
With ruffled raiments, and fair blubbered face,  
As her outrageous foe had left her late ;  
And trembling yet through fear of former hate :  
All stand amazéd at so uncouth sight,  
And 'gin to pity her unhappy state ;  
All stand astonied at her beauty bright,  
In their rude eyes unworthy of so woful plight.

Una, brought by the Fauns and Satyrs to the cool retreat of the aged woodland deity, Sylvanus, is received with great honour.

The woody nymphs, fair Hamadryades,  
Her to behold do thither run apace ;

And all the troop of light-foot Naiades  
Flock all about to see her lovely face.

Long time she abode in this retreat of sylvan beauty, and instructed the rude nation in the arts of civilization. While here, she made the acquaintance of Sir Satyrane, a being half satyr and half man, but of noble heart and strong arm, under whose protection at length she again sallied forth. In this journey they meet Sansloy, and another terrible battle ensues, in the midst of which, and while the contest is still doubtful, the narrative breaks off, and returns to Saint George and Duessa.

The Knight, cured from his wound, but still feeble, has his suspicions aroused respecting the safety of this place of abode; he flees therefore from the House of Pride, and is found seated by a cooling fountain in a pleasant green-wood, his armour on the ground, and by him the still specious Duessa. A spell had been put upon the waters of this fountain; whoever thenceforth drank of them, became faint and enervated. The Knight drank. Relaxed, not less in his moral, than his physical frame, behold him—

Poured out in looseness on the grassy ground,  
Both careless of his health and of his fame:  
Till at the last he heard a dreadful sound,  
Which through the wood loud bellowing did rebound,  
That all the earth for terror seemed to shake,  
And trees did tremble. Th' Elf, therewith astound,  
Upstartd lightly from his looser Make,  
And his unready weapons 'gan in hand to take.

But ere he could his armour on him dight,  
Or get his shield, his monstrous enemy  
With sturdy steps came stalking in his sight,

An hideous GIANT, horrible and high,  
 That with his tallness seemed to threat the sky ;  
 The ground eke groanéd under him for dread ;  
 His living like saw never living eye,  
 Ne durst behold ; his stature did exceed  
 The height of three the tallest sons of mortal seed.

The greatest Earth his úncouth mother was,  
 And blustering Æolus his boasted sire.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* His stalking steps are staid  
 Upon a snaggy oak, which he had torn  
 Out of his mother's bowels, and it made  
 His mortal mace, wherewith his foemen he dismayed.

That, when the Knight he spied, he gan advance  
 With huge force and insúpportable main,  
 And towards him with dreadful fury prance ;  
 Who, hapless, and eke hopeless, all in vain  
 Did to him pace sad battle to darrain,  
 Disarmed, disgraced, and inwardly dismayed ;  
 And eke so faint in every joint and vein,  
 Through that frail fountain, which him feeble made,  
 That scarcely could he wield his bootless single blade.

The Giant strook so mainly merciless,  
 That could have overthrown a stony tower ;  
 And, were not heavenly grace that did him bless,  
 He had been powdered all, as thin as flour :  
 But he was wary of that deadly stour,  
 And lightly leapt from underneath the blow :  
 Yet so exceeding was the villain's power,  
 That with the wind it did him overthrow,  
 And all his senses stunned, that still he lay full low.

Saint George is taken captive by the giant Orgoglio (arrogance), and suffers great cruelty during his imprisonment. The whole scene reminds one strongly of "Doubting Castle" and the "Giant Despair." Duessa becomes the bride of Orgoglio, is dressed in scarlet,



wears a triple crown, and rides upon a beast having seven heads.

The woful Dwarf, who for a long time has not been mentioned, had followed the fortunes of the Red-Cross Knight, until his capture by Orgoglio. The Dwarf, seeing his master captured, fled. He had not gone far before he met with the Lady Una, who had also fled during the encounter between Sansloy and her new champion, Sir Satyrane. The woful Lady learns from the Dwarf all that had happened to the Red-Cross Knight, the foul deceptions that had been practised upon him, and his present captivity.

She heard with patience all unto the end ;  
And strove to master sorrowful assay,  
Which greater grew, the more she did contend,  
And almost rent her tender heart in tway ;  
And love fresh coals unto her fire did lay :  
For greater love the greater is the loss.  
Was never Lady lovéd dearer day  
Than she did love the Knight of the Red-Cross :  
For whose dear sake so many troubles her did toss.

At last when fervent sorrow slakéd was,  
She up arose, resolving him to find  
Alive or dead ; and forward forth doth pass,  
All as the Dwarf the way to her assigned :  
And evermore, in constant careful mind,  
She fed her wound with fresh renewéd bale :  
Long tost with storms, and beat with bitter wind,  
High over hills, and low adown the dale,  
She wandered many a wood, and measured many a vale.

Such is the hopeless state of affairs, when a new and illustrious personage appears. This is no less than the noble PRINCE ARTHUR. This knight excels in magnificence all other knights, as far as the Lady



Una herself would surpass a common country maid. His majestic but youthful person, his heroic and knightly bearing, his matchless armour, his princely qualities, are topics suited to the genius of Spenser. The reader finds himself in a perfect blaze of splendour. It is a brightness not devoid of heat. The imagination becomes not only dazzled, but warmed. The whole picture, indeed, is like one of those magnificent cathedrals of the olden time, in which the mind of the devout worshipper, faint with the endless multiplicity of ever-increasing wonders, finds relief at last in that ultimate and only resting-place of human thought, the heavens to which the ever-springing Gothic arch doth point.

But Spenser's description of Prince Arthur must not be spoiled by extracts. It should be read entire, and in its connexion, or not at all.

This noble person extricates the parties from their difficulties. He assaults the castle of the giant, slays Orgoglio, strips the hateful Duessa of her scarlet finery, exposes her foul deformities, and releases the captive Red-Cross Knight. The adventure of Prince Arthur occupies about eight hundred and fifty lines, and forms one of the connecting links between the first book and those which follow. It is something like the intervention of a comet within the bounds of our solar system, where it lingers awhile, and then flies away into different and distant systems with which we are not yet acquainted.

After Arthur has taken his departure, Saint George and Una resume their journey. While travelling together, enjoying sweet discourse, they meet something

well suited to excite in the strongest degree their curiosity and their sympathy.

So as they travelled, lo! they gan espy  
 An arméd Knight towards them gallop fast,  
 That seeméd from some fearéd foe to fly,  
 Or other grisly thing, that him aghast.\*  
 Still, as he fled, his eye was backward cast,  
 As if his fear still followed him behind:  
 Als† flew his steed, as he his bands had brast,‡  
 And with his wingéd heels did tread the wind,  
 As he had been a foal of Pegasus his kind.§

Nigh as he drew, they might perceive his head  
 To be unarmed, and curled, uncombéd hairs  
 Upstaring stiff, dismayed with uncouth dread:  
 Nor drop of blood in all his face appears,  
 Nor life in limb; and, to increase his fears,  
 In foul reproach of knighthood's fair degree,  
 About his neck an hempen rope he wears,  
 That with his glistering arms does ill agree:  
 But he of rope or arms has now no memory.

The Knight of the Red-Cross stops him and asks him to explain the cause of his strange flight.

He answered nought at all; but adding new  
 Fear to his first amazement, staring wide  
 With stony eyes and heartless hollow hue,  
 Astonished stood, as one that had espied  
 Infernal Furies with their chains untied.  
 Him yet again and yet again, bespake  
 The gentle Knight; who nought to him replied;  
 But trembling every joint, did inly quake,  
 And faltering tongue at last these words seemed forth to  
 shake.

---

\* *Aghast* (a verb), terrified. † *Als*, also. ‡ *Brast*, burst. § *Pegasus his kind*, for Pegasus's kind. Thus also, John Barnes *his* book, for John Barnes's book. There seems to have been a tendency towards this anomalous mode of forming the possessive, about the time that the old Saxon genitive *es* (*Christes*) was exchanged for the modern 's (*Christ's*).

The Knight, whose name is Trevisan, explains that he and another named Terwin were by chance beguiled into the cave of the villain DESPAIR. This monster seemed to have the power of instilling deadly moral poison into the *mind*. Having properly infected the minds of these two victims, he had lent, with a sneer, to the one a rope, and to the other a rusty knife. Says Trevisan :

His subtle tongue, like dropping honey, melt'h  
 Into the heart, and searcheth every vein ;  
 That ere one be aware, by secret stealth  
 His power is reft, and weakness doth remain ;  
 O never, Sir, desire to try his guileful train.

The Red-Cross Knight determines at once not to be daunted by this miscreant, but to seek and destroy him. They go accordingly, against the entreaty of Trevisan, to the *Cave of Despair*.

Ere long they come, where that same wicked wight  
 His dwelling has, low in an hollow cave,  
 Far underneath a craggy cliff ypight,  
 Dark, doleful, dreary, like a greedy grave,  
 That still for carrion carcasses doth crave :  
 On top whereof aye dwelt the ghastly owl,  
 Shrieking his baleful note, which ever drave  
 Far from that haunt all other cheerful fowl ;  
 And all about it wandering ghosts did wail and howl :

And all about old stocks and stubs of trees,  
 Whereon nor fruit nor leaf was ever seen,  
 Did hang upon the ragged rocky knees ;  
 On which had many wretches hangéd been,  
 Whose carcasses were scattered on the green,  
 And thrown about the cliffs. Arrivéd there,  
 That bare-head Knight, for dread and doleful teen.

Would fain have fled, ne durst approachen near ;  
But th' other forced him stay, and comforted in fear.

That darksome cave they enter, where they find  
That curséd man, low sitting on the ground,  
Musing full sadly in his sullen mind :  
His greasy locks long growén and unbound,  
Disordered hung about his shoulders round,  
And hid his face ; through which his hollow eyne  
Looked deadly dull, and staréd as astound ;  
His raw-bone cheeks, through penury and pine,  
Where shrunk into his jaws, as he did never dine.

His garment, nought but many ragged clouts,  
With thorns together pinned and patchéd was,  
The which his naked sides he wrapt abouts :  
And him beside there lay upon the grass  
A dreary corse, whose life away did pass,  
All wallowed in his own yet lukewarm blood,  
That from his wound yet welléd fresh, alas !  
In which a rusty knife fast fixé stood,  
And made an open passage for the gushing flood.

The dead corse was that of the man whom Despair  
had prompted to kill himself. It was a sight to stir  
the blood even of the coolest. Saint George draws  
his trusty blade to despatch at once this cowardly  
villain. But he has widely mistaken the nature of the  
danger upon which he is entering. Little does that  
man know his weakness, who having once dwelt in  
the House of Pride, or paid his court at the shrine  
of the Senses, or unbuckled his armour beside the  
enervating waters of Ease, meets for the first time this  
new foe. The danger is something of a subtle nature,  
not to be overcome by mere force. You cannot strike  
that which makes no resistance. Despair crouches,  
but *reasons* ; and having once gained audience of



the understanding, suggests troublesome doubts, and sophistical arguments, that gently insinuate themselves into the mind, and shake in the end its steadfast faith in virtue and Divine Providence. I need hardly ask the reader's attention to the following scene, long as it is. I do not recollect to have seen, in the whole compass of literature, the argument for suicide stated with such awful force.

Which piteous spectacle, approving true  
 The woful tale that Trevisan had told,  
 Whenas the gentle Red-Cross Knight did view :  
 With fiery zeal he burnt in courage bold  
 Him to avenge, before his blood were cold ;  
 And to the Villain said : " Thou damnéd wight,  
 The author of this fact we here behold,  
 What justice can but judge against thee right,  
 With thine own blood to price\* his blood, here shed in  
 sight?"

" What frantic fit," quoth he, " has thus distraught  
 Thee, foolish man, so rash a doom to give?  
 What justice ever other judgment taught,  
 But he should die, who merits not to live?  
 None else to death this man despairing drive  
 But his own guilty mind, deserving death.  
 Is then unjust to each his due to give?  
 Or let him die that loatheth living breath?  
 Or let him die at ease, that liveth here uneath?†

" Who travels by the weary wandering way,  
 To come unto his wishéd home in haste,  
 And meets a flood, that doth his passage stay ;  
 Is not great grace to help him over past,  
 Or free his feet that in the mire stick fast?  
 Most envious man, that grieves at neighbour's good ;  
 And fond, that joyest in the wo thou hast ;

---

\* Price, to give the price of, to pay for.

† Uneath, uneasily.



Why wilt not let him pass, that long hath stood  
Upon the bank, yet wilt thyself not pass the flood?

“He there does now enjoy eternal rest  
And happy ease, which thou dost want and crave,  
And farther from it daily wanderest:  
What if some little pain the passage have,  
That makes frail flesh to fear the bitter wave;  
Is not short pain well borne, that brings long ease,  
And lays the soul to sleep in quiet grave?  
Sleep after toil, port after stormy seas,  
Ease after war, death after life, does greatly please.”

The Knight much wondered at his sudden wit,  
And said: “The term of life is limited,  
Ne may a man prolong, nor shorten it:  
The soldier may not move from watchful stead,  
Nor leave his stand until his captain bid.”  
“Who life did limit by Almighty doom,”  
Quoth he, “knows best the terms established;  
And he, that ’points the sentinel his room,  
Doth license him depart at sound of morning drum.

“Is not His deed, whatever thing is done  
In heaven and earth? Did not He all create  
To die again? All ends that was begun:  
Their times in His eternal book of fate  
Are written sure, and have their certain date.  
Who then can strive with strong necessity,  
That holds the world in his still changing state;  
Or shun the death ordained by destiny?  
When hour of death is come, let none ask whence, nor why.

“The longer life, I wot the greater sin;  
The greater sin, the greater punishment:  
All those great battles, which thou boastst to win  
Through strife, and bloodshed, and avengement,  
Now praised, hereafter dear thou shalt repent:  
For life must life, and blood must blood, repay.  
Is not enough thy evil life forespent?

For he that once hath missed the right way,  
The farther he doth go, the farther he doth stray.

“Then do no farther go, no farther stray;  
But here lie down, and to thy rest betake,  
Th’ ill to prevent that life ensuén may.  
For what hath life, that may it lovéd make,  
And gives not rather cause it to forsake?  
Fear, sickness, age, loss, labour, sorrow, strife,  
Pain, hunger, cold that makes the heart to quake;  
And ever fickle fortune rageth rife;  
All which, and thousands more, do make a loathsome life.

“Thou, wretched man, of death hast greatest need,  
If in true balance thou wilt weigh thy state  
For never Knight, that daréd warlike deed,  
More luckless disadvantages did amate:  
Witness the dungeon deep, wherein of late  
Thy life shut up for death so oft did call;  
And though good luck prolongéd hath thy date,  
Yet death then would the like mishaps forestall,  
Into the which hereafter thou mayst happen fall.

“Why then dost thou, O man of sin, desire  
To draw thy days forth to their last decree?  
Is not the measure of thy sinful hire  
High heapéd up with huge iniquity,  
Against the day of wrath to burden thee?  
Is not enough, that to this Lady mild  
Thou falséd hast thy faith with perjury,  
And sold thyself to serve Duessa vile  
With whom in all abuse thou hast thyself defiled?

“Is not He just, that all this doth behold  
From highest heaven, and bears an equal eye?  
Shall He thy sins up in His knowledge fold,  
And guilty be of thine impiety?  
Is not His law, *Let every sinner die,*  
*Die shall all flesh?* What then must needs be done,  
Is it not better to do willingly,

Than linger till the glass be all outrun ?  
 Death is the end of woes. Die soon, O Fairy's Son."

The Knight was much enmovéd with his speech,  
 That as a sword's point through his heart did pierce,  
 And in his conscience made a secret breach,  
 Well knowing true all that he did rehearse,  
 And to his fresh remembrance did reverse  
 The ugly view of his deforméd crimes ;  
 That all his manly powers it did disperse,  
 As he were charméd with enchanted rhymes ;  
 That oftentimes he quaked, and fainted oftentimes.

In which amazement when the Miscreant  
 Perceivéd him to waver weak and frail,  
 Whilst trembling horror did his conscience daunt,  
 And hellish anguish did his soul assail ;  
 To drive him to despair, and quite to quail,  
 He showed him painted in a table\* plain  
 The damnéd ghosts, that do in torments wail,  
 And thousand fiends, that do them endless pain  
 With fire and brimstone, which for ever shall remain.

The sight whereof so thoroughly him dismayed,  
 That nought but death before his eyes he saw,  
 And ever burning wrath before him laid,  
 By righteous sentence of th' Almighty's law.  
 Then gan the Villain him to overeraw,†  
 And brought unto him swords, ropes, poison, fire,  
 And all that might him to perdition draw ;  
 And bade him choose, what death he would desire :  
 For death was due to him that had provoked God's ire.

But, whenas none of them he saw him take,  
 He to him raught‡ a dagger sharp and keen,  
 And gave it him in hand : his hand did quake  
 And tremble like a leaf of aspen green,  
*And troubled blood through his pale face was seen*

---

\* *Table* (Lat. *tabula*), picture. † *Overeraw* (crow over), insult. ‡ *Raught*, reached, handed.

*To come and go, with tidings from the heart,  
As it a running messenger had been.*

At last, resolved to work his final smart,  
He lifted up his hand, that back again did start.

Which whenas Una saw, through every vein  
The curdled cold ran to her well of life,  
As in a swoon: but, soon relived again,  
Out of his hand she snatched the curséd knife,  
And threw it to the ground, enragéd rife,  
And to him said: "Fie, fie, faint-hearted Knight,  
What meanest thou by this reproachful strife?  
Is this the battle, which thou vauntst to fight  
With that fire-mouthéd Dragon, horrible and bright?"

"Come; come away, frail, feeble, fleshly wight,  
Ne let vain words bewitch thy manly heart,  
Ne devilish thoughts dismay thy constant sprite:  
In heavenly mercies hast thou not a part?  
Why shouldst thou then despair, that chosen art?  
Where jústice grows, there grows eke greater grace,  
The which doth quench the brand of hellish smart,  
And that accurst handwriting doth deface:  
Arise, Sir Knight; arise, and leave this curséd place."

I have quoted thus freely from this Canto, the ninth, containing the description of the scene in the Cave of Despair, not only because of its great and almost terrific power, but because this is the Canto connected with that romantic tradition respecting the first interview between Spenser and Sir Philip Sidney.

In the next Canto, Una leads the Red-Cross Knight to a scene, in some respects the counterpart of the House of Pride. This is the HOUSE OF HOLINESS. Here he is placed for a time under the superintendence of the venerable Matron, Dame Celia, and enjoys the assistance and instructions of her three



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ENGRAVED BY A. WALTON PHILAD.

# THE CAVE OF DESPAIR.





godly daughters, Fidelia, Speranza, Charissa (faith, hope, and charity). The porter is a careful wight, named Humility. Among the characters described are Mr. Zeal, Squire Reverence, Doctor Patience, Surgeons Penance and Remorse, and the Hermit Contemplation. The reader of *Pilgrim's Progress* will find in the whole Canto many reminiscences. The Red-Cross Knight not only rests for a while from his labours, and is cured of his physical ailments, but is carefully instructed in the way of holiness. The doctrines and precepts of religion are carefully instilled into his mind, his thoughts are raised to the contemplation of higher objects, even those visions of celestial glory which burst upon his eyes as from the Hill of Contemplation he sees the far-off city of Cleopolis. He is made also to perceive the cause of his many mistakes and errors. In short, he becomes the model of a Christian hero—"a man of God, thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work." Thus invigorated and refreshed morally, mentally, and physically—"armed with the whole armour of God"—he once more sets out upon his journey.

Those not acquainted by experience with the exhaustless fertility of Spenser's invention, will be surprised to be told that all which we have passed through is the mere scaffolding to the main edifice—the mere preparation for the grand action of the book.

The Lady Una, it will be recollected, had fled to the court of Gloriana, Queen of Fairy Land, to ask succour under the following circumstances. Her father's kingdom had been ravaged, and her father and mother were closely besieged in their own castle,

by a horrible monster. The old man offered the heirship of his kingdom, and the hand of his daughter in marriage, to any knight who should destroy the horrible monster. The daughter went abroad over the earth, seeking a champion to rescue her aged parents. Coming to the court of Gloriana, as already related, the Queen of Faëry assigned the task to the Knight of the Red-Cross. The Knight had just set out upon this worthy errand, when we first saw him "pricking on the plain." Having gone through a variety of preparatory adventures, having learned equally his power and his weakness, having put to the trial both his lady-love and the weapons which he bears in her defence, he is now ready to enter, and the reader is prepared to see him enter, upon his principal adventure. The description of this adventure, containing the destruction of the monster, the release of the parents, and the betrothal of the lady to her chosen and deserving Knight, occupy the eleventh and twelfth Cantos.

Thus ends the First Book of the Fairy Queen. From the particulars which have been thus given, let us see if we cannot form by synthesis some distinct idea of the plan of the whole work. The First Book of it, we perceive, is a poem by itself. With all its infinity of details, it yet contains the unity essential to an Epic poem. It has unity of subject, unity of motives, and unity of general interest. At the same time, it has other relations, and is in itself only a part of a more comprehensive unity. The Red-Cross Knight and the Lady Una are, so to speak, the Earth and the Moon of a planetary system, which revolve around some common centre, and which do not the less converge

and concentre, because their Sun is connected by other ties with other systems and a wider circle. The Sun in this First Book is Prince Arthur. He does not occupy so large a space in the reader's attention as the Red-Cross Knight, for the same reason that, to an ignorant man, the Sun seems a smaller, though a brighter object than the Earth. Yet could an inhabitant of this globe visit successively the different planets, and while the Earth gradually shrank to the size of Mars or Jupiter, he should see the Sun still maintaining its unrivalled splendour and its enormous dimensions, he would gradually awaken to the conviction of the grand unity of the Solar System, and the controlling influence and importance of its one object, THE SUN.

So the reader of the Second, Third, Fourth, and other Books of the Fairy Queen, gradually forgets the absorbing interest of the First. Saint George and the Lady Una become small and indistinct to his imagination, while the PRINCELY ARTHUR continually grows upon the mental vision, and becomes at last the magnificent centre and embodiment of all excellence, of which each Book furnishes only some particular variety. Such was the noble and stupendous conception of Spenser. Let critics censure it as they please, there is a princely magnificence in the very idea.

The First Book, which we have now gone through, is entitled "The Legend of the Knight of the Red-Cross, or of Holiness." This is its one subject. In like manner each of the other books has its own subject, as Temperance, Chastity, &c., and its hero; and all are connected by the common hero, Arthur, who

represents **MAGNIFICENCE**. There is likewise a common heroine, viz. : **Gloriana**, the Queen of Fairy Land, who represents **GLORY**. To crown the whole, **Arthur** and **Gloriana** are to be united in marriage, that is, **Magnificence**, or the concentration of all excellence, is to be glorified, or meet its reward.

To return for a moment to the **First Book**. This, like all the other Books, is divided into twelve Cantos, each Canto being more than half as long as a Book in the **Paradise Lost**. A single Book of the **Fairy Queen**, therefore, is more than half the size of **Paradise Lost**. This will give another idea of the gigantic scale upon which **Spenser** planned, when it is recollected that his plan contemplated twelve such Books ; and some conception may be formed of his Herculean labours, when it is recollected that he actually executed six of these Books.

I have thus endeavoured to give by synthesis some general idea of the **Fairy Queen**, by giving in the first place a particular account of one of its elements. To make this idea complete, it will be necessary to examine in a similar way each of the other Books,—or, to resume the figure, to visit in succession the other planets of the system, that we may not only become acquainted with them and their inhabitants, but from them obtain new views of the glorious **Central Sun**,  
**THE PRINCELY ARTHUR.**



## BOOK II.

### THE LEGEND OF SIR GUYON, OR OF TEMPERANCE.

Review of Book I.—Definition of Temperance—The Palmer—The Babe with Bloody Hands—The three Sisters, Elissa, Perissa, and Medina—Braggadochio and Trompart—First Appearance of Belphebe—Furor and Occasion—Atin and Pyrochles—The Merry Mariner—The Idle Lake—Cymochles carried to her Islet—Sir Guyon and Phædria—Horrible End of Pyrochles—The Cave of Mammon—The House of Riches—The Temptation—Intervention of Prince Arthur—His Exploit—Sir Guyon and the Palmer embarked for the Island—The Gulf of Greediness—The Wandering Islands—The Monsters of the Deep—The Weeping Maiden—The Bay of the Mermaids—The Unclean Birds—The Wild Beasts—They reach the Island—The Garden—The Fair Portress—The Lakelet and the Bathing Damsels—The Bower of Bliss—Capture of the Enchantress, Acrasia—The Adventure Completed—Character of Sir Guyon.

IN the account of the previous Book, I attempted to give the reader by synthesis some idea of the general plan of the whole poem. That is, I gave pretty full particulars in regard to one of its leading elements or component parts, and from this attempted to construct a distinct plan of the whole. This plan will be rendered still more obvious by quoting in this place a part of Spenser's explanatory letter to Raleigh, printed originally as an appendix to the first three Books of the Fairy Queen. As Spenser did not live to complete his grand design, this letter is particularly important to a proper understanding of

the parts which he did finish. We shall have occasion to quote from it still more at length hereafter. Only that portion is now quoted which relates to the matter immediately in hand. Spenser's language is as follows :

“The method of a poet historical is not such, as of an historiographer. For an historiographer discourseth of affairs orderly as they were done, accounting as well the times as the actions; but a poet thrusteth into the midst, even where it most concerneth him. . . . The beginning therefore of my History, if it were to be told by an historiographer, should be the twelfth Book, which is the last; where [in which Book] I devise that the Fairy Queen kept her annual feast twelve days; upon which twelve several days, the occasions of the twelve several Adventures happened, which, being undertaken by twelve several Knights, are in these twelve Books severally handled and discoursed. The first was this. In the beginning of the feast, there presented himself a tall clownish young man, who falling before the Queen of Fairies desired a boon (as the manner then was) which during that feast she might not refuse; which [boon] was that he might have the achievement of any Adventure, which during that feast should happen. That being granted, he rested him on the floor, unfit through his rusticity for a better place. Soon after entered a fair lady in mourning weeds, riding on a white ass, with a dwarf behind her leading a warlike steed, that bore the arms of a Knight, and his spear in the Dwarf's hand. She, falling before the Queen of Fairies, complained that her father and mother, an ancient King and Queen, had been by an

huge Dragon many years shut up in a brazen Castle, who thence suffered them not to issue: and therefore besought the Fairy Queen to assign her some one of her Knights to take on him that exploit. Presently that clownish person, upstarting, desired that Adventure: whereat the Queen much wondering, and the Lady much gainsaying, yet he earnestly importuned his desire. In the end the Lady told him, that unless that armour which she brought, would serve him (that is, the armour of a Christian man specified by St. Paul, v. Ephes.) [the Breast-plate of righteousness, the Shield of Faith, the Helmet of Salvation, the Sword of the Spirit], that he could not succeed in that enterprise: which being forthwith put upon him with due furnitures thereunto, he seemed the goodliest man in all that company, and was well liked of the Lady. And eftsoons taking on him Knighthood, and mounting on that strange courser, he went forth with her on that Adventure: where beginneth the First Book, "A gentle Knight was pricking on the plain," &c.

Commencing at this point, I gave, in my account of the First Book, a succession of scenes, containing the principal adventures of this Knight, who proved to be the famous Saint George, or the Knight of the Red-Cross. We saw this valiant Knight overcome successively Error, Superstition, Infidelity, Pride, and Despair; we saw him, when under a temporary defeat through the wiles of a subtle adversary, rescued by the timely interposition of a noble and princely benefactor; we saw his virtuous principles confirmed and purified under the auspices of religion; and lastly, we saw his entire success in the accomplishment of the

task which had been assigned him, the accomplishment of which task was the appointed means of perfecting him in Holiness. Connecting in thought and comparing the scenes thus rapidly sketched, we found the first Book of the Fairy Queen shadowing forth a general principle, not inaptly symbolized in its title, which is "The Legend of the Red-Cross Knight, or of HOLINESS." The Knight, who is the embodiment of this principle, was found to be aided by another personage, who not only possesses this principle, and in a still higher degree than Saint George, but possesses equally various other principles of human excellence. That idea forms the connecting link between the first Book and those which succeed. Each of those principles is to be developed in a separate Book, and by the adventures of a separate Knight, in company with the common hero, Prince Arthur. This latter, being the embodiment of all human excellence, bears the same relation to the Knights, and the adventures of each particular Book, that the Sun bears to the planets of the solar system, controlling and centering all, and giving to the whole that unity in diversity which is an essential element of beauty in the works both of man and of his Maker.

Let us proceed then to enter another enclosure of the ample domain of thought now opened to the view. The adventures about to be celebrated are those of Sir Guyon, or of TEMPERANCE. Temperance is here used in no narrow or conventional sense. The word comes from the Latin *tempero*, which means to restrain or govern one's self. Spenser uses it in the sense of universal moderation, and as opposed to excess of every description, whether mental or bodily—tempe-



rance not only in drinks, but in food—temperance not only in the indulgence of every kind of bodily appetite, but in the exercise even of the desires and affections. The man who attains this high excellence must not only avoid all sin, but even in the performance of what is right, and in the enjoyment of what is permitted, must keep the even tenor of his way, and maintain under all circumstances a perfect and calm serenity of purpose. It is neither the phlegm of the Stoic, nor the torpor of the Brahmin, but the heavenly repose of the beloved disciple—the tranquillity of a mind capable of emotions too strong for passion, of feelings too deep for agitation—a placid lake, whose pebbly bottom, so clearly revealed to the eye of the beholder, argues not the shallowness of its waters, nor the absence of disturbing causes, but the purity of the crystal element, and the height of its embosoming and wind-protecting hills.

Sir Guyon, in the development and for the cultivation of this great principle of Temperance, passes through many scenes of an opposite character, which would have often led him astray but for the presence of a faithful attendant, an aged and holy Palmer (reflection). In following Sir Guyon through these scenes of temptation, the reader of Spenser is not without need of the same faithful attendant. Let not the imagination be beguiled by the warm and too life-like colouring which the poet in some passages gives to the allurements of the world. Amid the brightest illusions which the wand of genius can summon, it is well to reflect that in reality there is nothing bright, nothing true, nothing calm but heaven!

Before commencing the exposition of the second



Book, a single explanation may be not amiss. We find, in the very beginning, that Prince Arthur is not the only connecting link between this Book and the first. The Red-Cross Knight, Archimago, and Duessa all reappear. The same thing is true in the following Books. The circumstance is noticed here, once for all, simply to prevent the necessity of any recurrence to the subject hereafter. The explanation is this. The story in each Book is separate, as already stated. But characters and scenes once introduced in previous Books, are always supposed to be already known to the reader, and are brought in incidentally, wherever occasion requires, without any particular explanation or description.

The occasion of Sir Guyon's adventure was as follows :

While he and his trusty Palmer are travelling through the country, they chance to pass along the skirt of a deep forest. Their attention is suddenly arrested by a most piercing and bitter shriek issuing from the thickest of the wood. On listening, they hear again the same voice, that of a female, uttering to herself the sentiment of despair, and ending with these words :

“Come, then ; come soon ; come, sweetest Death, to me,  
And take away this long-lent loathéd light :  
Sharp be thy wounds, but sweet the medicines be,  
That long captivéd souls from weary thralldom free.

“But thou, sweet Babe, whom frowning froward fate  
Hath made sad witness of thy father's fall,  
Since heaven thee deigns to hold in living state,  
Long mayst thou live, and better thrive withal  
Than to thy luckless parents did befall !

Live thou ; and to thy mother dead attest,  
That clear she died from blemish criminal :  
Thy little hands imbrued in bleeding breast  
Lo ! I for pledges leave ! So give me leave to rest !”

With that a deadly shriek she forth did throw  
That through the wood re-echoéd again ;  
And after gave a groan so deep and low  
That seemed her tender heart was rent in twain,  
Or thrilled with point of thorough-piercing pain :

Which when that Warrior heard, dismounting straight  
From his tall steed, he rushed into the thick,  
And soon arrivéd where that sad Portrait  
Of death and dolour lay, half dead, half quick ;  
In whose white alabaster breast did stick  
A cruel knife that made a grisly wound,  
From which forth gushed a stream of gore-blood thick  
That all her goodly garments stained around,  
And into a deep sanguine dyed the grassy ground.

Pitiful spectacle of deadly smart,  
Beside a bubbling fountain low she lay,  
Which she increaséd with her bleeding heart,  
And the clean waves with purple gore did ray :  
Als in her lap a lovely babe did play  
His cruel sport, instead of sorrow due ;  
For in her streaming blood he did embay  
His little hands, and tender joints imbrue :  
Pitiful spectacle, as ever eye did view !

Beside them both, upon the soiled grass,  
The dead corse of an arméd Knight was spread,  
Whose armour all with blood besprinkled was ;  
His ruddy lips did smile, and rosy red  
Did paint his cheerful cheeks, yet being dead ;  
Seemed to have been a goodly personage,  
Now in his freshest flower of lustyhed,  
Fit to inflame fair Lady with love’s rage,  
But that fierce fate did crop the blossom of his age.

The lady, though mortally wounded by her own rash act, is not yet dead. Sir Guyon staunches the blood and resuscitates her, so far as to enable her to give before dying some account of the circumstances which led her to self-murder.

Her story is this. Her spouse was a gallant Knight and a loving husband. But going forth upon a knightly adventure soon after their marriage, he had fallen in with a false Enchantress, by whom he had been beguiled. This Enchantress was called ACRASIA (intemperance). The wretched, forsaken wife had wandered forth in search of her false, but still loved husband. She found him at length in the Bower of Bliss with the painted Enchantress, and by her remonstrances and entreaties prevailed on him to return to the paths of rectitude and sobriety. The Enchantress, vexed at his departure, gave him at parting a glass of wine, and uttered over it a spell, by virtue of which he should die, the moment he "Bacchus with the Nymph does link;" that is, should desert his wine (Bacchus), and partake of water (Nymph)—a result *said* sometimes to follow the abrupt return to cold water, after excessive indulgence in alcoholic drinks. The mystic words of the Enchantress were lost upon the wife and her restored husband, until, reaching a fountain, tired and thirsty, he stooped to drink, and instantly expired. Then, for the first time, did the wretched woman understand the import of those mystic words, and the full measure of her own woe. Overcome with anguish, and thoughtful more of her grief than of her duty toward her child, she plunged into her bosom the fatal knife, and in that condition was found by Sir Guyon.

The lady survives just long enough to finish her tale,

and then expires. Sir Guyon, having attended to the burial of the wretched woman and her dishonoured husband, and resolving in his mind to nurture and educate the babe in some suitable way, proceeds with increased and burning zeal upon the adventure which has been assigned him by Gloriana, the Queen of Fairy Land. This adventure is no other than to destroy the wicked Enchantress ACRASIA, by whose machinations this babe has been thus made an orphan.

On turning to look for his steed, from which he had dismounted, behold it was nowhere to be found. Sir Guyon, therefore, has to proceed on his adventure afoot. What became of the steed, the reader will know hereafter.

Which when Sir Guyon saw, all were he wroth,  
Yet algates must he soft himself appease,  
And fairly fare on foot, however loth :  
His double burden did him sore disease.\*  
So, long they travelléd with little ease,  
Till that at last they to a Castle came,  
Built on a rock adjoining to the seas :  
It was an ancient work of ántique fame,  
And wondrous strong by nature and by skilful frame.

Therein three Sisters dwelt of sundry sort,  
The children of one sire by mothers three ;  
Who, dying whilom, did divide this fort  
To them by equal shares in equal fee ;  
But strifeful mind and diverse quality  
Drew them in parts, and each made other's foe ;  
Still did they strive and daily disagree ;  
The eldest did against the youngest go,  
And both against the middést meant to worken wo.

Where when the Knight arrived, he was right well  
Received, as Knight of so much worth became,

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\* *Disease*, make un-easy.



Of second Sister, who did far excel  
The other two; Medina was her name,  
A sober, sad, and comely courteous dame:  
Who rich arrayed, and yet in modest guise,  
In goodly garments that her well became,  
Fair marching forth in honourable wise,  
Him at the threshold met and well did enterprise.

She led him up into a goodly bower,  
And comely courted with meet modesty;  
Ne in her speech, ne in her haviour,†  
Was lightness seen or looser vanity,  
But gracious womanhood, and gravity,  
Above the reason of her youthly years:  
Her golden locks she roundly did uptie  
In braided trammels, that no looser hairs  
Did out of order stray about her dainty ears.

The oldest of the sisters, Elissa, entertains a lover, Sir Hudibras, more noted for his moroseness and ill-temper than for his courage. The youngest, Perissa, is loved by our old acquaintance, the lawless Sansloy. The extreme sisters (the oldest and the youngest) are always at jar with each other, except when for a time they unite to oppose the wishes of her—the middle sister—who, on occasion, interferes to keep the peace, and exhorts them to observe the golden mean. In like manner their lovers, Hudibras and Sansloy, are constantly bickering and quarrelling, except on the occasion of a joint attack upon him who shall attempt to mediate between them. When Sir Guyon enters this castle for entertainment, Medina receives him courteously, as was meet; but the other sisters and their lovers no sooner hear of his arrival than they hasten towards that part of the castle where the stranger is

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\* *Haviour*, behaviour. and pronounced as a trisyllable, hav-i-our.



reputed to be, with intent immediately, and without cause, to assail him. But, even while on their way, ere they have crossed the castle-yard, they fall out again with each other.

But, ere they could proceed unto the place  
Where he abode, themselves at discord fell,  
And cruel combat joined in middle space :  
With horrible assault, and fury fell,  
They heaped huge strokes the scornéd life to quell,  
That all on uproar from her settled seat  
The house was raised, and all that in did dwell ;  
Seemed that loud thunder with amazement great  
Did rend the rattling skies with flames of fouldering\* heat.

The noise thereof called forth that stranger Knight,  
To weet what dreadful thing was there in hand ;  
Where whenas two brave Knights in bloody fight  
With deadly rancour he enrangéd found,  
His sunbroad shield about his' wrist he bound,  
And shining blade unsheathed, with which he ran  
Unto that stead, their strife to understand ;  
And, at his first arrival, them began  
With goodly means to pacify, well as he can.

But they, him spying, both with greedy force  
At once upon him ran, and him beset  
With strokes of mortal steel without remorse,  
And on his shield like iron sledges beat.  
As when a bear and tiger, being met  
In cruel fight on Lybic ocean wide,  
Espy a traveller with feet surbet,†  
Whom they in equal prey hope to divide,  
They stint their strife and him assail on every side.

But he, not like a weary traveller,  
Their sharp assault right boldly did rebut,  
And suffered not their blows to bite him near,  
But with redoubled buffs them back did put :

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\* *Fouldering*, thundering.

† *Surbet*, wearied, bruised.

Whose grievéd minds, which choler did englut,  
Against themselves turning their wrathful spite,  
Gan with new rage their shields to hew and cut.  
But still, when Guyon came to part their fight,  
With heavy load on him they freshly gan to smite.

As a tall ship tosséd in troublous seas,  
Whom raging winds, threat'ning to make the prey  
Of the rough rocks, do diversely disease,\*  
Meets two contráry billows by the way,  
That her on either side do sore assay,  
And boasts to swallow her in greedy grave;  
She, scorning both their spites, does make wide way,  
And, with her breast breaking the foamy wave,  
Does ride on both their backs, and fair herself doth save:

So boldly he him bears, and rusheth forth  
Between them both, by conduct of his blade.  
Wondrous great prowess and heroic worth  
He showed that day, and rare ensample made,  
When two so mighty warriors he dismayed:  
At once he wards and strikes; he takes and pays;  
Now forced to yield, now forcing to invade;  
Before, behind, and round about him lays:  
So double was his pains, so double be his praise.

Medina rushes in between the combatants, and endeavours to prevent the shedding of blood, for which no better reason could be assigned, than can be assigned for the thousand murders done in hot blood by those who have not learned to bridle rage. Her sisters, on the contrary, strive still more to embroil the fray. Moderate counsels at length prevail, and harmony is for a time restored.

At the feast which ensues, the different parties, in the indulgence of the social affections, show the same

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\* *Disease, make uneasy.*

peculiarities which marked the exercise of their more violent emotions.

Elissa (so the eldest hight) did deem  
Such entertainment base, ne ought would eat,  
Ne ought would speak, but evermore did seem  
As discontent for want of mirth or meat ;  
No solace could her paramour entreat  
Her once to show, ne court, nor dalliance ;  
But with bent lowering brows, as she would threat,  
She scowled, and frowned with froward countenance ;  
Unworthy of fair Ladies' comely governance.

But young Perissa was of another mind,  
Full of disport, still laughing, loosely light,  
And quite contráry to her sister's kind ;  
No measure in her mood, no rule of right,  
But pouréd out in pleasure and delight :  
In wine and meats she flowéd above the bank,  
And in excess exceeded her own might ;  
In sumptuous tire she joyed herself to prank,  
But of her love too lavish : little have she thank !

Fast by her side did sit the bold Sansloy,  
Fit mate for such a mincing minion,  
Who in her looseness took exceeding joy ;  
Might not be found a franker franion,  
Of her lewd parts to make companion.  
But Hudibras, more like a malecontent,  
Did see and grieve at his bold fashion ;  
Hardly could he endure his hardiment ;  
Yet still he sat, and inly did himself torment.

Betwixt them both the fair Medina sat  
With sober grace and goodly carriage :  
With equal measure she did moderate  
The strong extremities of their outráge ;  
That forward pair she ever would assuage,  
When they would strive due reason to exceed ;  
But that same froward twain would accorage,  
And of her plenty add unto their need :  
So kept she them in order, and herself in heed.

This Medina is the person to whose care the education of the young orphan is intrusted. She and her sisters do not again appear in the course of the story, and may therefore be dismissed from the thoughts.

We have now advanced through two Cantos of the Book. The third Canto is wholly occupied with an episode, relating the adventures of a vain-glorious fool named Braggadochio.

Whether a mind constituted, as was Spenser's, with all its solemn and stately imagery, is capable of conceiving a character like that of Falstaff, is a matter of doubt. The nearest approach to such a character in the *Fairy Queen*, is that now presented to the reader. There are undoubtedly great and essential points of difference between these two worthies. But had Shakspeare given us a picture of Falstaff at a tournament, he would have passed for some kin, at least, to Braggadochio. Shakspeare has given us the braggart as he appears in real life. Spenser has shown the same character among the dreamy scenes of romance.

Braggadochio's first appearance in the *Fairy Queen* is where Sir Guyon and the Palmer were burying the unfortunate Knight and Lady, the victims of Acrasia. Braggadochio had long believed himself capable of adorning the ranks of knighthood. All that he lacked was a horse. Behold one, fully caparisoned and ready to his hand. How certain it is, that Providence takes care of the virtuous !

He that brave steed there finding ready dight,  
Purloined both steed and spear, and ran away full light.

Now gan his heart all swell in jollity,  
And of himself great hope and help conceived,



That pufféd up with smoke of vanity,  
 And with self-lovéd personage deceived,  
 He gan to hope of men to be received  
 For such, as he him thought, or fain would be:  
 But for\* in Court gay portance he perceived,  
 And gallant shew to be in greatest gree,†  
 Eftsoons to Court he cast t' advance his first degree.

And by the way he chancéd to espy  
 One sitting idle on the sunny bank,  
 To whom avaunting in great bravery,  
 As peacock that his painted plumes doth prank,  
 He smote his courser in the trembling flank,  
 And to him threatened his heart-thrilling spear:  
 The silly man, seeing him ride so rank  
 And aim at him, fell flat to ground for fear,  
 And crying, "Mercy," loud, his piteous hands gan rear.

Thereat the Scarecrow waxéd wondrous proud,  
 Through fortune of his first adventure fair,  
 And with big thundering voice reviled him loud;  
 "Vile caitiff, vassal of dread and despair,  
 Unworthy of the common breathéd air,  
 Why livest thou, dead dog, a longer day,  
 And dost not unto death thyself prepare?  
 Die, or thyself my captive yield for aye:  
 Great favour I thee grant for answer thus to stay."

"Hold, O dear Lord, hold your dead-doing hand,"  
 Then loud he cried, "I am your humble thrall."  
 "Ah wretch," quoth he, "thy destinies withstand  
 My wrathful will, and do for mercy call.  
 I give thee life. Therefore prostráted fall,  
 And kiss my stirrup; that thy homage be."

*Trompart*, the first-fruits of Braggadochio's prowess,  
 becomes his squire and general serving man, and the  
 worthy pair travel forth together.

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\* *For*, because.

† *Gree*, favour.



So forth they pass, a well-consorted pair,  
Till that at length with Archimage they meet :  
Who seeing one, that shone in armour fair,  
On goodly courser thundering with his feet,  
Eftsoons supposed him a person meet  
Of his revenge to make the instrument ;  
For since the Red-Cross Knight he erst did weet  
To be with Guyon knit in one consent,  
The ill which erst to him, he now to Guyon meant.

Malice is sometimes outwitted by its own instruments. Archimago, coming close to Trompart, inquires of him privately who his master is that rides in such a splendid golden saddle, and on such a powerful charger, but armed only with a spear, without either sword or shield. "Oh," says Trompart, "he has made a vow never to carry sword. His spear alone is enough to make a thousand quake." Archimago thereupon, supposing he has found one competent to avenge him upon the Red-Cross Knight, and upon Sir Guyon, approaches the puissant champion with lowly obeisance, and tells the story of his wrongs.

Therewith all suddenly he seemed enraged,  
And threatened death with dreadful countenance,  
As if their lives had in his hand been gaged ;  
And with stiff force shaking his mortal lance,  
To let him weet his doughty valiance,  
Thus said : " Old man, great sure shall be thy meed,  
If, where those Knights for fear of due vengeance  
Do lurk, thou certainly to me aread,  
That I may wreak on them their heinous hateful deed."

Archimago says, "Certainly, certainly, I will show you where to find them. But, my noble Sir, pardon the suggestion, they are two very valiant knights. Do not, I beseech you, give them such odds. Pray,

Sir, before you encounter them, provide yourself with a sword."

"Dotard," said he, "let be thy deep advice ;  
Seems that through many years thy wits thee fail,  
And that weak eld hath left thee nothing wise,  
Else never should thy judgment be so frail  
To measure manhood by the sword or mail.  
Is not enough four quarters of a man,  
Withouten sword or shield, an host to quail ?  
Thou little wottest that this right-hand can :  
Speak they, which have beheld the battles which it wan."

The man was much abashéd at his boast ;  
Yet well he wist that whoso would contend  
With either of those Knights on even coast,  
Should need of all his arms him to defend ;  
Yet fearéd lest his boldness should offend :  
When Braggadochio said : "Once I did swear,  
When with one sword seven Knights I brought to end,  
Thenceforth in battle never sword to bear,  
But it were that which noblest Knight on earth doth wear."

Tradition differs as to the *exact* number of men in buckram that Falstaff saw, but seven knights slain single handed with one sword, is a pretty respectable story !

Braggadochio's vow about wearing a sword is not absolute, but conditional. He will not wear one, unless it is a sword that has belonged to the noblest knight on earth. Having from past experience not quite so great a contempt for the prowess of Saint George and Sir Guyon as the braggart seems to have, Archimago resolves to overcome the scruples of his champion, by getting for him a sword which he can wear without breaking his vow. He undertakes, in short, to deliver to Braggadochio, by to-morrow, *the enchanted sword of Prince Arthur*.

Braggadocchio starts. Enchantment—magic—these are fearful things. He turns to look for the little old man, but no old man is there. He looks at Trompart. Trompart looks at him. They both look at each other. They both (I am sorry for the honour of knighthood to record it), but, they both run away most incontinently. They stop not—

Till that they come unto a forest green,  
 In which they shroud themselves from causeless fear;  
 Yet fear them follows still, where so they been:  
 Each trembling leaf and whistling wind they hear,  
 As ghastly bug,\* does greatly them affear:†  
 Yet both do strive their fearfulness to feign.  
 At last they heard a *horn* that shrilléd clear  
 Throughout the wood that echoéd again,  
 And made the forest ring, as it would rive in twain.

That horn—what *can* it be? Presently there is a rustling noise, as of some one passing through the wood. Braggadocchio, after all, is but a mortal. He dismounts from his courser, and creeps into the thickest part of the bushes! But Trompart's curiosity gets the better of his terror, and he stops to see what he, she, it, or they, might be.

But Trompart stoutly stayed to taken heed  
 Of what might hap. Eftsoon there steppéd forth  
 A goodly Lady clad in hunter's weed,  
 That seemed to be a woman of great worth,  
 And by her stately portance born of heavenly birth.

Her face so fair, as flesh it seeméd not,  
 But heavenly portrait of bright angel's hue,  
 Clear as the sky, withouten blame or blot,  
 Through goodly mixture of complexions due;  
 And in her cheeks the vermeil red did shew

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\* Bug, bugbear.

† Affear, frighten.

Like roses in a bed of lilies shed,  
The which ambrosial odours from them threw,  
And gazer's sense with double pleasure fed,  
Able to heal the sick and to revive the dead.

In her fair eyes two living lamps did flame,  
Kindled above in th' Heavenly Maker's light,  
And darted fiery beams out of the same,  
So passing piersant,\* and so wondrous bright,  
In them the blinded god his lustful fire  
To kindle oft essayed, but had no might ;  
For with dread majesty and awful ire,  
She broke his wanton darts, and quenched base desire.

Her ivory forehead, full of bounty brave,  
Like a broad table did itself dispread,  
For Love his lofty triumphs to engrave,  
And write the battles of his great godhead :  
All good and honour might therein be read ;  
For there their dwelling was. And when she spake,  
Sweet words, like dropping honey, she did shed ;  
And 'twixt the pearls and rubies softly brake  
A silver sound, that heavenly music seemed to make.

This heavenly creature, of whose elaborate description I have quoted a small portion, is BELPHŒBE. She is a distinguished personage, and will reappear in subsequent Books, but not in this. Suffice it here to say of her, she is dressed as a huntress, inquires of Trompart respecting a stag that she had wounded, points one of her glittering arrows towards a thicket in which the leaves stir, supposing some animal lay crouching there, when—out crawls our hero!

After some conversation and adventure, highly characteristic, the brilliant phenomenon departs with the speed and grace of one of her own arrows.—The worthy couple go their ways, and—we go ours.

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\* *Piersant*, piercing.



And first let us inquire after Sir Guyon.

It fortunéd, forth faring on his way,  
 He saw from far, or seeméd for to see,  
 Some troublous uproar, or contentious fray,  
 Whereto he drew in haste it to agree.\*  
 A Madman, or that feignéd mad to be,  
 Drew by the hair, along upon the ground,  
 A handsome Stripling with great cruelty,  
 Whom sore he beat, and gored with many a wound,  
 That cheeks with tears, and sides with blood, did all abound.

And him behind a wicked Hag did stalk,  
 In raggéd robes and filthy disarray;  
 Her other leg was lame, that she no'te† walk,  
 But on a staff her feeble steps did stay:  
 Her locks, that loathly were and hoary gray,  
 Grew all afore, and loosely hung unrolled;  
 But all behind was bald, and worn away,  
 That none thereof could ever taken hold;  
 And eke her face ill-favoured, full of wrinkles old.

And, ever as she went, her tongue did walk  
 In foul reproach and terms of vile despite,  
 Provoking him, by her outrageous talk,  
 To heap more vengeance on that wretched wight:  
 Sometimes she raught‡ him stones, wherewith to smite;  
 Sometimes her staff, though it her one leg were,  
 Withouten which she could not go upright;  
 Ne any evil means she did forbear,  
 That might him move to wrath, and indignation rear.

The noble Guyon, moved with great remorse,  
 Approaching, first the Hag did thrust away;  
 And after, adding more impetuous force,  
 His mighty hands did on the Madman lay,  
 And plucked him back; who, all on fire straightway,  
 Against him turning all his fell intent,  
 With beastly brutish rage gan him assay,

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\* Agree (trans.), to make agreed, reconcile. † No'te, could not. ‡ Raught, reached.



And smote, and bit, and kicked, and scratched, and rent,  
And did he wist not what in his avengement.

And sure he was a man of mickle might,  
Had he had governance it well to guide :  
But, when the frantic fit inflamed his sprite,  
His force was vain, and struck more often wide  
Than at the aimed mark which he had eyed :  
And oft himself he chanced to hurt unwares,  
Whilst reason, blent\* through passion, nought desried ;  
But, as a blindfold bull, at random fares,  
And where he hits nought knows, and whom he hurts nought  
cares.

Sir Guyon, accustomed only to "fair defence and goodly managings of arms," is embarrassed by this new mode of encounter. Still he does not yield his ground. Seizing the villain with a strong gripe, he attempts to throw him to the ground by main force. In so doing he himself stumbles and falls. Hereupon the villain beats him in the face with his fists, the old Hag standing by and urging him on. Sir Guyon, recovering his footing, draws his sword to despatch at once the miscreant, but is restrained by the Palmer, who informs him of the true nature of his danger and the manner in which it is to be met. Rage is not to be subdued by mere brute force, nor yet by a direct act of volition, but by removing or restraining the exciting cause. *Bind first the old Hag Occasion, and her son Furor will soon cease to rage.* Avoid all those scenes or occasions which call into exercise any ungovernable passion. If you attempt to check violence by violence, you only increase the evil, as rivers when stopped in their course, overflow their banks. Such are the counsels of the venerable Palmer.

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\* *Blent*, blinded.

Therewith Sir Guyon left his first emprise,  
 And, turning to that Woman, fast her hent\*  
 By the hoar locks that hung before her eyes,  
 And to the ground her threw: yet n'ould† she stent‡  
 Her bitter railing and foul révilement;  
 But still provoked her son to wreak her wrong:  
 But nathéless he did her still torment,  
 And, catching hold of her ungracious tongue,  
 Thereon an iron lock did fasten firm and strong.

Then, whenas use of speech was from her reft,  
 With her two crookéd hands she signs did make,  
 And beckoned him; the last help she had left:  
 But he that last left help away did take,  
 And both her hands fast bound unto a stake,  
 That she no'te‡ stir. Then gan her son to fly  
 Full fast away, and did her quite forsake:  
 But Guyon after him in haste did hie,  
 And soon him overtook in sad perplexity.

With hundred iron chains he did him bind,  
 And hundred knots, that did him sore constrain:  
 Yet his great iron teeth he still did grind  
 And grimly gnash, threatening revenge in vain:  
 His burning eyes, whom bloody streaks did stain,  
 Staréd full wide, and threw forth sparks of fire;  
 And more for rank despite than for great pain,  
 Shaked his long locks coloured like copper wire,  
 And bit his tawny beard to show his raging ire.

Having thus secured Furor and Occasion, Sir Guyon  
 turned to the young Squire whom they had nigh beaten  
 to death. The youth recounts to the Knight and  
 Palmer the steps by which he had been made the thrall  
 of raging passions. He loved and wooed a gentle  
 dame. Assent of parents was gained, and the day of

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\* *Hent*, seized. † *N'ould* (ne would), would not. ‡ *Stent*, stint, restrain. § *No'te*,  
 could not.

their nuptials appointed. A friend, who had been his play-fellow from infancy, contrived to insinuate doubts of the truth of his lady-love. Not stopping to reflect and sift the truth of these base surmises, passion carried him forward blindly, first to murder the innocent lady, then to poison his bosom friend, and lastly to attempt the life of the silly chamber-maid, whose thoughtless but not guilty frivolities had been the unwitting cause of a mutual deception. Such is the brief but instructive history of ungoverned temper. Reason is blinded by passion, passion leads to crime, crime is followed by remorse, and remorse by MADNESS!

Sir Guyon has not much time to spend in reflection upon this painful recital. Their attention is soon attracted by something which will hardly fail to attract ours.

Thus as he spake, lo! far away they spied  
A Varlet, running towards hastily,  
Whose flying feet so fast their way applied,  
That round about a cloud of dust did fly,  
Which, mingled all with sweat, did dim his eye.  
He soon approachéd, panting, breathless, hot,  
And all so soiled, that none could him descry;  
His countenance was bold, and bashéd not  
For Guyon's looks, but scornful eye-glance at him shot.

Behind his back he bore a brazen shield,  
On which was drawn fair, in colours fit,  
A flaming fire, in midst of bloody field,  
And round about the wreath this word was writ,  
*Burnt I do burn.* Right well beseeméd it  
To be the shield of some redoubted Knight:  
And in his hand two darts exceeding flit  
And deadly sharp he held, whose heads were dight  
In poison and in blood of malice and despite.

This varlet is named Atin, and is the squire of a Knight named PYROCHLES.\* They are in search of the old beldam, Occasion, who comes generally soon enough unsought. Sir Guyon points to Occasion, bound in fetters, as before described. The varlet taunts Sir Guyon with lack of courage, "with silly, weak old woman thus to fight." His master, Pyrochles, arriving soon after, never stops to inquire whether Sir Guyon is friend or foe, but dashes away, as many another hot-head has done.

Approaching nigh, he never staid to greet,  
 Ne chaffer words, proud courage to provoke,  
 But pricked so fierce, that underneath his feet  
 The smouldering dust did round about him smoke,  
 Both horse and man nigh able for to choke;  
 And, fairly couching his steel-headed spear,  
 Him first saluted with a sturdy stroke:  
 It bootéd not Sir Guyon, coming near,  
 To think such hideous puissance on foot to bear.

Sir Guyon, being on foot, evades the spear-thrust by a dexterous movement of his body, and aims a blow at Pyrochles as he passes. This blow glances from the hemlet of Pyrochles, but mortally wounds his horse. Pyrochles is thus brought to his feet, and so the fight continues between the two Knights both on foot. Pyrochles gradually lashes himself into such a fury that he becomes perfectly reckless.

He hewed, and lashed, and foined, and thundered blows,  
 And every way did seek unto his life;  
 Ne plate, ne mail, could ward so mighty throws,  
 But yielded passage to his cruel knife,

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\* *Pyrochles* (from the Greek *πῦρ* fire, and *χλαζω* or *χληζω* to rush), Hotspur (?).



But Guyon, in the heat of all his strife,  
 Was wary wise, and closely did await  
 Advantage, whilst his foe did rage most rife;  
 Sometimes athwart, sometimes he struck him straight,  
 And falséd oft his blows t' illude him with such bait.

It is not difficult to predict the issue of a contest between steady and well tempered valour, and ungovernable rage. Pyrochles is soon brought to the ground, disarmed, and made to sue for life. This being granted, Guyon asks why he had made so unprovoked an attack upon a stranger. "It was complained," said Pyrochles, "that you had used violence towards a defenceless old woman, and put her in chains; and, indeed, there she is. I exhort you even now, on your manhood, let her go free, and her son too." "Is that all?" said Guyon. "If you want them, take them, but take care how you let them loose again." But your Hotspur is as inconsiderate in his kindness, as in his wrath. Let him take the consequence of his second folly. No sooner is Occasion unloosed from her bonds than she begins to stir up fresh quarrel. Her son being also released, is instigated by her to attack, not Sir Guyon, but his own benefactor and deliverer. A fierce battle ensues, in which Furor gets the mastery over the fool-hardy Knight, who had released them. In the midst of the fray Sir Guyon goes off and—leaves the fool to his fate.

Atin, seeing his master subdued, and foully abused by Furor and Occasion, hastens to summon to the rescue a brother of Pyrochles—a man of the same genus, but of a different species. CYMOCHLES\* (wave-

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\* *Cymochles* (Gr. κύμα a wave, and χλαζω to rush, to be impelled), wave-driven(?).



driven), is one who knows no self-restraining or self-compelling power. Agitated by every passing wind of passion, he possesses equally the violence and the fickleness of the element which is his emblem—now a mountain-wave bearing shipwreck upon its crest—now a gently undulating stream in which pleasure may paddle her gilded boat undisturbed. Such is the wavering, fluctuating Cymochles. Atin finds him reposing in a pleasure-garden—

All carelessly displayed  
In secret shadow from the sunny ray,  
On a sweet bed of lilies softly laid,  
Amidst a flock of damsels fresh and gay,  
That round about him dissolute did play  
Their wanton follies and light merriment.

From this scene, exhibiting the self-abandonment of pleasure, Cymochles is roused by the tale of his brother's disaster to another, exhibiting equally the self-abandonment of revenge.

Behold then Cymochles, roused by a sudden impulse of revenge, at the water's edge, seeking some means of conveyance to the mainland. A novel spectacle rivets his attention.

Waiting to pass he saw whereas did swim  
Along the shore, as swift as glance of eye,  
A little Gondola, bedeckéd trim  
With boughs and arbours woven cunningly,  
That like a little forest seeméd outwardly.

And therein sat a Lady fresh and fair,  
Making sweet solace to herself alone :  
Sometimes she sung as loud as lark in air,  
Sometimes she laughed, that nigh her breath was gone ;  
Yet was there not with her else any one,  
That to her might move cause of merriment :  
Matter of mirth enough, though there were none,

She could devise ; and thousand ways invent  
To feed her foolish humour, and vain jolliment.

Which when far off Cymochles heard and saw,  
He loudly called to such as were aboard  
The little bark unto the shore to draw,  
And him to ferry over that deep ford.  
The merry Mariner unto his word  
Soon hearkened, and her painted boat straightway  
Turned to the shore, where that same warlike Lord  
She in received ; but Atin by no way  
She would admit, albe the Knight her much did pray.

Eftsoons her shallow ship away did slide,  
More swift than swallow shears the liquid sky,  
Withouten oar or pilot it to guide,  
Or wingéd canvass with the wind to fly :  
Only she turned a pin, and by and by  
It cut away upon the yielding wave,  
(Ne caréd she her course for to apply),  
For it was taught the way which she would have,  
And both from rocks and flats itself could wisely save.

And all the way the wanton Damsel found  
New mirth her passenger to entertain ;  
For she in pleasant purpose did abound,  
And greatly joyéd merry tales to feign,  
Of which a store-house did with her remain ;  
Yet seeméd, nothing well they her became :  
For all her words she drowned with laughter vain,  
And wanted grace in uttering of the same,  
That turned all her pleasance to a scoffing game.

Her light behaviour and loose dalliance  
Gave wondrous great contentment to the Knight,  
That of his way he had no souvenance,  
Nor care of vowed revenge and cruel fight ;  
But to weak wench did yield his martial might.  
So easy was to quench his flaméd mind  
With one sweet drop of sensual delight !

So easy is t' appease the stormy wind  
Of malice in the calm of pleasant womankind !

Cymochles interrogates the gay damsel as to her name and condition. She informs him, her name is Phædria (immodest mirth); she is servant of the enchantress Acrasia (intemperance); the waters on which they are floating, are named the Idle Lake. To the wave-driven Cymochles, the nearest temptation is always the strongest. Removed from the immediate instigations of Atin, his vengeance melts like snow under the sunny influences of mirth and idleness; and he is carried unwittingly, not to the mainland, but to another island. The island which we are about to visit is not that which contains Acrasia and the Bower of Bliss, but a sweet little islet belonging to the laughing, merry Phædria.

“ In this wide inland sea, that hight by name  
The Idle Lake, my wandering ship I row,  
That knows her port, and thither sails by aim,  
Ne care, ne fear I how the wind do blow,  
Or whether swift I wend, or whether slow :  
Both slow and swift alike do serve my turn ;  
Ne swelling Neptune, ne loud thundering Jove  
Can change my cheer, or make me ever mourn :  
My little boat can safely pass this perilous bourn.”

Whilst thus she talkéd, and whilst thus she toyed,  
They were far past the passage which he spake,  
And come unto an Island waste and void,  
That floated in the midst of that great Lake ;  
There her small gondola her port did make,  
And that gay pair issuing on the shore  
Disburdened her: their way they forward take  
Into the land that lay them fair before,  
Whose pleasance she him showed, and plentiful great store.

It was a chosen plot of fertile land,  
Amongst wide waves set, like a little nest,  
As if it had by nature's cunning hand  
Been choicely pickéd out from all the rest,  
And laid forth for ensample of the best:  
No dainty flower or herb that grows on ground,  
No arboret with painted blossoms dressed  
And smelling sweet, but there it might be found  
To bud out fair, and her sweet smells throw all around.

No tree, whose branches did not bravely spring;  
No branch, whereon a fine bird did not sit;  
No bird, but did her shrill notes sweetly sing;  
No song, but did contain a lovely dit.  
Trees, branches, birds, and songs, were framéd fit  
For to allure frail mind to careless ease.  
Careless the man soon waxed, and his weak wit  
Was overcome of thing that did him please:  
So pleaséd did his wrathful purpose fair appease.

Thus when she had his eyes and senses fed  
With false delights, and filled with pleasures vain,  
Into a shady dell she soft him led,  
And laid him down upon a grassy plain;  
And her sweet self without dread or disdain  
She set beside, laying his head disarmed  
In her loose lap, it softly to sustain,  
Where soon he slumbered fearing not be harmed:  
The whiles with a love-lay she thus him sweetly charmed.

"Behold, O man, that toilsome pains dost take,  
The flowers, the fields, and all that pleasant grows,  
How they themselves do thine ensample make,  
Whiles nothing envious nature them forth throws  
Out of her fruitful lap; how, no man knows,  
They spring, they bud, they blossom fresh and fair,  
And deck the world with their rich pompous shows;  
Yet no man for them taketh pains or care,  
Yet no man to them can his careful pains compare.



"The lily, lady of the flowering field,  
 The flower-de-luce, her lovely paramour,  
 Bid thee to them thy fruitless labours yield,  
 And soon leave off this toilsome weary stour :  
 Lo ! lo, how brave she decks her bounteous bower,  
 With silken curtains and gold coverlets,  
 Therein to shroud her sumptuous belamour !  
 Yet neither spins nor cards, ne cares nor frets,  
 But to her mother nature all her care she lets.

"Why then dost thou, O man, that of them all  
 Art Lord, and eke of nature Soverain,\*  
 Wilfully make thyself a wretched thrall,  
 And waste thy joyous hours in needless pain,  
 Seeking for danger and adventures vain ?  
 What boots it all to have and nothing use ?  
 Who shall him rue that, swimming in the main,  
 Will die for thirst, and water doth refuse ?  
 Refuse such fruitless toil, and present pleasures choose."

By this she had him lulléd fast asleep,  
 That of no worldly thing he care did take :  
 Then she with liquors strong his eyes did steep,  
 That nothing should him hastily awake.  
 So she him left, and did herself betake  
 Unto her boat again, with which she cleft  
 The slothful wave of that great greasy Lake.

Leaving the deluded victim of impulse to sleep on in his dangerous abode, let us return to Sir Guyon. This Knight and his faithful Palmer, in search of the island from which Cymochles had been ferried, and of the enchantress who ruled it, had now arrived at the lake, and were standing on the bank seeking for the means of crossing to the island, as Cymochles had sought the means of crossing from it. Behold Phædria again plying her painted gondola. Called by Sir

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\* *Soverain*, pronounced as a trisyllable, Sov-e-rain.



Guyon, she nears the shore and takes him in, but absolutely refuses admission to his companion.

Is Sir Guyon safe, embarked upon the dangerous waters of Idleness, under the guidance of unrestrained Mirth, and the venerable Palmer left behind? *Reader, did not thine own sternness relax, as the laughing Damsel carolled forth her tuneful argument?*—In following Sir Guyon, it may relieve thee to recollect that he hath never yet swerved from his integrity; and indeed, after some anxiety as to the result, we find him entirely proof against the arts which had been successful with the other Knight. Instead, however, of taking him to the island of which he was in search, the merry damsel conducts him to her own little islet. By the time of their arrival, Cymochles had awaked. A fight ensues between the Knights. Sir Guyon having disarmed his antagonist, is prevented from killing him by the interposition of Phædria. The damsel at last, wearied of attempting to draw away the mind of Sir Guyon from sobriety and honour, is glad to get rid of him, and so takes him ashore in her skiff. Atin, who had been left standing upon the shore, on seeing Sir Guyon, taunts him with bitter jibes. But reproach from man is less dangerous than flattery from woman. The well-poised mind, which is proof against the blandishments of Phædria, will not be driven from its balance by the revilings of Atin. They part,—the Knight to pursue his adventure, the varlet to wail still by the water, when behold a new wonder!

Whilst there the Varlet stood, he saw from far  
An arméd Knight that towards him fast ran;  
He ran on foot, as if in luckless war  
His fórlorn steed from him the victor won:

He seeméd breathless, heartless, faint, and wan ;  
 And all his armour sprinkled was with blood,  
 And soiled with dirty gore, that no man can  
 Discern the hue thereof : he never stood,  
 But bent his hasty course towards the Idle Flood.

The Varlet saw, when to the Flood he came,  
 How without stop or stay he fiercely leaped,  
 And deep himself beduckéd in the same,  
 That in the Lake his lofty crest was steeped,  
 Ne of his safety seeméd care he kept ;  
 But with his raging arms he rudely flashed  
 The waves about, and all his armour swept,  
 That all the blood and filth away was washed ;  
 Yet still he beat the water, and the billows dashed.

Atin drew nigh to weet what it might be ;  
 For much he wondered at that uncouth sight :  
 Whom should he but his own dear Lord there see,  
 His own dear Lord Pyrochles in sad plight,  
 Ready to drown himself for sore despite :  
 " Harrow now, out and well away !" he cried,  
 " What dismal day hath lent this curséd light,  
 To see my Lord so deadly damnified !  
 Pyrochles, O Pyrochles, what is thee betide ?"

" I burn, I burn, I burn," then loud he cried,  
 " O how I burn with implacable fire !  
 Yet nought can quench mine inly flaming side,  
 Nor sea of liquor cold, nor Lake of mire ;  
 Nothing but death can do me to respire."

\* \* \* \*

He called : " Pyrochles, what is this I see ?  
 What hellish fury hath at erst thee hent ?"  
 Furious ever I thee knew to be ;  
 Yet never in this strange astonishment."  
 " These flames, these flames," he cried, " do me torment !"

"What flames," quoth he, "when I thee present see  
In danger rather to be drent\* than brent?"†

"Harrow! the flames which me consume," said he,  
"Ne can be quenched, within my secret bowels be.

"That curséd man, that cruel fiend of hell,  
Furor, oh! Furor hath me thus bedight:  
His deadly wounds within my liver swell,  
And his hot fire burns in mine entrails bright,  
Kindled through his infernal brand of spite,  
Since late with him I battle vain would boast;  
That now I ween Jove's dreaded thunder-light  
Does scorch not half so sore, nor damnéd ghost  
In flaming Phlegethon does not so felly roast."

Such is the miserable consequence of rashly attempting to conquer Fury, instead of removing Occasion. Atin plunges into the water to his master's relief, but in vain. An old man at last approaches the shore, whom they recognise. It is Archimago. Malice, which hath not yet accomplished its end, cannot afford to lose its instruments. Archimago, foiled in his attempts upon the Red-Cross Knight, needs all his auxiliaries in his new war upon Sir Guyon. He finds a sálve therefore to relieve the miserable Knight. We leave the party to plot their schemes of mischief, and follow Sir Guyon.

The ability to resist the allurements of frivolity, and the agitations of anger, are not a certain index of universal Temperance, that perfect equipoise of the soul which we are now seeking. How often do we see man denying himself all innocent recreation, and steeling himself even against the gentle influences of the softer sex, not because he possesses superior virtue, but because he is blindly delving after gain. We must

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\* *Drent*, drowned.

† *Brent*, burnt.

see Sir Guyon, then, under new circumstances before we can judge finally of his character. Behold him, therefore, once more wandering alone through a tangled and trackless forest.

At last he came unto a gloomy glade,  
Covered with boughs and shrubs from heaven's light,  
Whereas he sitting found in secret shade  
An uncouth, savage, and uncivil Wight,  
Of grisly hue, and foul ill-favoured sight;  
His face with smoke was tanned, and eyes were bleared,  
His head and beard with soot were ill bedight,  
His coal-black hands did seem to have been seared  
In smith's fire-spitting forge, and nails like claws appeared.

His iron coat, all overgrown with rust,  
Was underneath envelopéd with gold;  
Whose glistening gloss, darkened with filthy dust,  
Well yet appearéd to have been of old  
A work of rich entail\* and curious mould,  
Woven with antiques and wild imagery:  
And in his lap a mass of coin he told,  
And turnéd upside down, to feed his eye  
And covetous desire with his huge treasury.

And round about him lay on every side  
Great heaps of gold that never could be spent;  
Of which some were rude ore, not purified  
Of Mulciber's devouring element;  
Some others were new driven, and distent  
Into great ingots and to wedges square;  
Some in round plates withouten moniment:†  
But most were stamped, and in their metal bare  
The antique shapes of kings and Kesars strange and rare.

After listening in the first Book to the ingenious reasonings of the villain Despair, we are not surprised

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\* *Entail*, sculpture, carving (It. *intaglio*). † *Moniment*, image, stamp (Lat. *monimentum*).



to find MAMMON arguing well his case, and putting in such strong light the excellence and advantages of wealth, that one is almost tempted to think, for a moment, that money is not such a bad thing after all. But Guyon is not tempted by the eloquent *words* of the Money-god. Mammon therefore resolves to exhibit before his eyes the *sight* of such wealth as no mortal had ever before beheld. The descent into the interior of the earth to the cave of Mammon, is thoroughly Spenserian. The House of Riches is thus described.

So soon as Mammon there arrived, the door  
To him did open and afforded way:  
Him followed eke Sir Guyon evermore,  
Ne darkness him, ne danger might dismay.  
Soon as he entered was, the door straightway  
Did shut, and from behind it forth there leaped  
An ugly Fiend, more foul than dismal day;  
The which with monstrous stalk behind him stepped,  
And ever as he went due watch upon him kept.

Well hopéd he, ere long that hardy Guest,  
If ever covetous hand, or lustful eye,  
Or lips he laid on thing that liked him best,  
Or ever sleep his eye-strings did untie,  
Should be his prey: and therefore still on high  
He over him did hold his cruel claws,  
Threatening with greedy gripe to do him die,  
And rend in pieces with his ravenous paws,  
If ever he transgressed the fatal Stygian laws.

That House's form within was rude and strong,  
Like an huge cave hewn out of rocky clift,  
From whose rough vault the ragged breaches hung  
Embossed with massy gold of glorious gift,  
And with rich metal loaded every rift,



That heavy ruin they did seem to threat ;  
And over them Arachne high did lift  
Her cunning web, and spread her subtle net,  
Enwrappéd in foul smoke and clouds more black than jet.

Both roof, and floor, and walls, were all of gold,  
But overgrown with dust and old decay,  
And hid in darkness, that none could behold  
The hue thereof: for view of cheerful day  
Did never in that House itself display,  
But a faint shadow of uncertain light ;  
Such as a lamp, whose life does fade away ;  
Or as the moon clothéd with cloudy night,  
Does show to him that walks in fear and sad affright.

In all that room was nothing to be seen  
But huge great iron chests, and coffers strong,  
All barred with double bends, that none could ween  
Them to enforce by violence or wrong ;  
On every side they placéd were along.  
But all the ground with skulls was scatteréd  
And dead men's bones, which round about were flung ;  
Whose lives, it seeméd, whilom there were shed,  
And their vile carcasses now left unburiéd.

They forward pass ; ne Guyon yet spoke word,  
Till that they came unto an iron door,  
Which to them opened of his own accord,  
And showed of riches such exceeding store  
As eye of man did never see before,  
Ne ever could within one place be found,  
Though all the wealth, which is or was of yore,  
Could gathered be through all the world around,  
And that above were added to that under ground.

The charge thereof unto a covetous Sprite  
Commanded was, who thereby did attend,  
And warily awaited day and night,  
From other covetous Fiends it to defend,  
Who it to rob and ransack did intend.

Then Mammon, turning to that Warrior, said :  
 "Lo, here the worldés bliss ! lo, here the end  
 To which all men do aim, rich to be made !  
 Such grace now to be happy is before thee laid."

"Certes," said he, "I n'ill\* thine offered grace,  
 Ne to be made so happy do intend !  
 Another bliss before mine eyes I place,  
 Another happiness, another end.  
 To them, that list, these base regards I lend :  
 But I in arms, and in achievements brave,  
 Do rather choose my flitting hours to spend,  
 And to be lord of those that riches have,  
 Than them to have myself, and be their servile slave."

Mammon takes Sir Guyon from one apartment to another, through ever-varying scenes of splendour, but with like success. No variety or amount of untold wealth can tempt the steadfast Knight.

"Suffice it then, thou Money-God," quoth he,  
 "That all thine idle offers I refuse :  
 All that I need, I have ; what needeth me  
 To covet more than I have cause to use ?"

Money, however, is sometimes sought, not for its own sake, but as the means of gratifying a kindred, yet slightly different passion. Money can purchase for its possessor power, title, rank, every distinction but that of glory. Even the love of glory in some minds is not distinguished from the mere love of honour. Mammon has not only ingots and gems, but crowns and diadems, and the insignia of office ; he has, too, a royal daughter, named Ambition or Philotime (love of honour). All these are offered to the Knight, and are in turn rejected. Sir Guyon at last, after spending

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\* *N'ill*, ne will, will not.

three days amid these scenes of overpowering splendour, returns to the upper air, safe but exhausted. Overcome by these visions of the lower regions, he falls into a swoon and lies upon the ground, apparently dead.

What has become of the faithful Palmer all this while?—Denied a passage in the pleasure-boat of Phædria, he traversed the shore in various directions, until he obtained the means of crossing elsewhere, and found at length his master lying, as we just left him, apparently dead upon the ground. On feeling his pulse, he discovers signs of life, and tries to resuscitate him. While thus engaged, he is interrupted by the approach of two Knights, who prove to be none other than Pyrochles and Cymochles, accompanied by Atin and old Archimago, who had guided the others hither on purpose. The Knights determine to outrage the body of their dead foe, and against the stout remonstrances of the Palmer are about to strip him of his armour, when lo, a new personage appears. This is the noble Prince Arthur, who comes to the rescue of Sir Guyon in his extremity, as he did to that of Saint George in the previous Book. A long and bloody battle ensues, in which the brother Knights, Pyrochles and Cymochles, are slain, Atin and Archimago flee away, and Guyon awakens from his swoon. The intervention of Prince Arthur is graceful, heroic, brilliant. All his movements indicate a being of superior nature, in whom honour is instinct, and judgment intuition, whose deeds are princely, whose end is glory.

Had Spenser lived to complete the *Fairy Queen*, I have no doubt that Prince Arthur, from the glimpses which we have of him in the Books that exist, would

have formed by far the most attractive and interesting personage in the poem; and that his several adventures, scattered through the different Books, would have formed one beautiful and connected whole. As the matter now stands, however, while the story of each particular Knight is comparatively complete, that of Arthur is unfinished, and, like most unfinished things, unsatisfactory. The adventure in which Prince Arthur engages in the second Book, occupies the ninth, tenth, and eleventh Cantos. It is, furthermore, directly connected with the main subject of the Book, namely, the destruction of Maleger, the Captain-General of all the evils that beset the human mind through the medium of the bodily senses. The subject is not devoid either of interest or instruction. But, as much must be omitted, I omit this relating to Arthur, as I did his adventure in the first Book, and proceed at once to the twelfth Canto, containing the final and crowning adventure of Sir Guyon.

Behold Sir Guyon, then, embarked once more upon the waters, in search of that enchanted Island, where are the Bower of Bliss and its bewitching occupant, the Enchantress Acrasia. Strange and bewildering are the scenes through which he is to pass, and he hath not this time embarked without his faithful Palmer. Let the reader be like minded, who shall follow him in this perilous navigation.

Two days now in that sea he sailéd has,  
Ne ever land beheld, ne living wight,  
Ne ought save peril, still as he did pass:  
Then, when appearéd the third morrow bright  
Upon the waves to spread her trembling light,



An hideous roaring far away they heard,  
That all their senses filléd with affright;  
And straight they saw the raging surges reared  
Up to the skies, that them of drowning made afeard.

Said then the Boatman, "Palmer, steer aright,  
And keep an even course; for yonder way  
We needs must pass (God do us well acquit!)  
That is the Gulf of Greediness, they say,  
That deep engorgeth all this worldés prey;  
Which having swallowed up excessively,  
He soon in vomit up again doth lay,  
And belcheth forth his superfluity,  
That all the seas for fear do seem away to fly.

"On th' other side an hideous Rock is pight  
Of mighty magnet stone, whose craggy clift  
Depending from on high, dreadful to sight,  
Over the waves his rugged arms doth lift,  
And threat'neth down to throw his ragged rift  
On whoso cometh nigh; yet nigh it draws  
All passengers, that none from it can shift:  
For, whilst they fly that Gulf's devouring jaws,  
They on the rock are rent, and sunk in helpless waws."\*

Forward they pass, and strongly he them rows,  
Until they nigh unto that Gulf arrive,  
Where stream more violent and greedy grows:  
Then he with all his puissance doth strive  
To strike his oars, and mightily doth drive  
The hollow vessel through the threatful wave;  
Which, gaping wide to swallow them alive  
In th' huge abyss of his engulphing grave,  
Doth roar at them in vain, and with great terror rave.

So forth they rowéd; and that Ferryman  
With his stiff oars did brush the sea so strong,  
That the hoar waters from his frigot ran,  
And the light bubbles dancéd all along,

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\* Waws, woes.



Whilst the salt brine out of the billows sprung.  
At last far off they many Islands spy  
On every side floating the floods among:  
Then said the Knight: "Lo! I the land descry;  
Therefore, old Sire, thy course thereunto apply."

The aged Boatman tells him, those green and luxuriant spots, so tempting to the eye, are the Wandering Islands, on which whoever sets his foot can never retrace his step, but evermore wanders about, as do the Islands themselves, a useless, purposeless, miserable sluggard. The man who has given himself over to such a state, has made shipwreck of his hopes, quite as much as he who has plunged into the gulf of greediness, or been driven upon the rock of dissipation.

They to him hearken, as beseemeth meet;  
And pass on forward: so their way does lie,  
That one of those same Islands, which do fleet  
In the wide sea, they needs must passen by,  
Which seemed so sweet and pleasant to the eye,  
That it would tempt a man to touchen there:  
Upon the bank they sitting did espy  
A dainty Damsel dressing of her hair,  
By whom a little skippet floating did appear.

She, them espying, loud to them gan call,  
Bidding them nigher draw unto the shore,  
For she had cause to busy them withal;  
And therewith loudly laughed: but nathémore  
Would they once turn, but kept on as afore:  
Which when she saw, she left her locks undight,  
And running to her boat withouten oar,  
From the departing land it launchéd light,  
And after them did drive with all her power and might.

This damsel is no stranger to the reader. She

meets no encouragement from Sir Guyon, and returns to her islet.

The next peril which our navigators have to encounter, is the difficult passage between the quicksand of Unthriftyhood and the whirlpool of Decay. But, thanks to the brawny arms of the old Boatman, and the steady hand of the Palmer, the light frigot goes on in its even course, when a new terror arrests the attention.

Sudden they see, from midst of all the main,  
The surging waters like a mountain rise,  
And the great sea, puffed up with proud disdain,  
To swell above the measure of his guise,  
As threatening to devour all that his power despise.

The waves come rolling, and the billows roar  
Outrageously, as they enragéd were,  
Or wrathful Neptune did them drive before  
His whirling chariot for exceeding fear;  
For not one puff of wind there did appear;  
That all the three thereat waxed much afraid,  
Unweeting what such horror strange did rear.  
Eftsoons they saw an hideous host arrayed  
Of huge sea-monsters, such as living sense dismayed:

Most ugly shapes and horrible aspécts,  
Such as dame Nature's self might fear to see,  
Or shame, that ever should so foul defects  
From her most cunning hand escapéd be;  
All dreadful portraits of deformity:  
Spring-headed Hydras; and sea-shouldering Whales;  
Great Whirlpools, which all fishes make to flee;  
Bright Scolopendras armed with silver scales;  
Mighty Monoceros with immeasured tails;

The dreadful fish, that hath deserved the name  
Of Death, and like him looks in dreadful hue;  
The grisly Wasserman, that makes his game  
The flying ships with swiftness to pursue;

The horrible Sea-Satyr, that doth shew  
 His fearful face in time of greatest storm ;  
 Huge Ziffius, whom mariners eschew  
 No less than rocks, as travellers inform ;  
 And greedy Rosmarines with visages deform :

All these, and thousand thousands many more,  
 And more deforméd monsters thousand-fold,  
 With dreadful noise and hollow rumbling roar  
 Came rushing, in the foamy waves enrolled,  
 Which seemed to fly for fear them to behold :  
 Ne wonder, if these did the Knight appal ;  
 For all that here on earth we dreadful hold,  
 Be but as bugs\* to fearen babes withal,  
 Comparéd to the creatures in the sea's entráll.†

The Palmer informs him that these monsters are but phantoms of the imagination, conjured up by the Witch, who was about to be dislodged, and who wished to terrify him from his course. *Let not the after-horrors even of Delirium Tremens cause the poor inebriate, intent on reform, to falter in his course, or be terrified from his good resolutions.* The Palmer, lifting his wand, smites the waters. Instantly the monsters disappear, and the sea again is calm.

Sir Guyon sees, not far off upon an island, a seemly maiden, lone and desolate, wringing her hands in great distress. He is proof against smiles, as Phædria can testify, but not against tears. He bids the Palmer steer the boat that way, wishing to alleviate the distress of the maiden. But the Palmer tells him it is "only womanish fine forgery,"—and he keeps on his way.

They next approach the Bay of the Mermaids.

And now they nigh aproachéd to the stead  
 Whereas those Mermaids dwelt. It was ā still

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\* Bugs, bugbears.

† Entráll, entrail.

And calmy bay, on th' one side shelteréd  
 With the broad shadow of an hoary hill ;  
 On th' other side an high rock towered still,  
 That 'twixt them both a pleasant port they made,  
 And did like an half theatre fulfil :  
 There those five Sisters had continual trade,  
 And used to bathe themselves in that deceitful shade.

So now to Guyon as he passéd by,  
 Their pleasant tunes they sweetly thus applied :  
 "O thou fair son of gentle Faéry,  
 That art in mighty arms most magnified  
 Above all Knights that ever battle tried,  
 O turn thy rudder hitherward awhile :  
 Here may thy storm-beat vessel safely ride ;  
 This is the port of rest from troublous toil,  
 The world's sweet Inn from pain and wearisome turmoil."

With that the rolling sea, resounding soft,  
 In his big Bass them fitly answeréd ;  
 And on the rock the waves breaking aloft  
 A solemn Mean unto them measuréd ;  
 The whilst sweet Zephyrus loudly whistléd  
 His Treble, a strange kind of harmony ;  
 Which Guyon's senses softly tickléd,  
 That he the Boatman bade row easily,  
 And let him hear some part of their rare melody.

Once more the faithful Palmer interposes, and the boat keeps on its steady course.

But Pleasure is not easily to be dislodged from her wonted seat. There are monsters of the air, as well as of the deep. Presently a dull, dense vapour overspreads the heavens, followed by a flock of innumerable myriads of foul and noisome birds, flapping their dirty wings, and uttering their discordant screams about and over the luckless mariners. But on, on, goes that steady boat. No toil can weary, no



terror can alarm, no temptation can beguile its earnest occupants; and at last they reach the Island, and touch the shore.

No sooner are they on terra-firma, than a countless troop of savage beasts besets them. The wand of the Palmer once more averts the danger, and these ravenous beasts (the human victims of Acrasia, who had been by her transformed into beasts), are disenchanted and restored to their right shape and mind.

Such wondrous power did in that staff appear,  
All monsters to subdue to him that did it bear.

But there is an end to all things. They come at length to the garden and the Bower of Bliss.

This garden is enclosed around with a fence—not such as might prove a means of security, but light and fanciful. The gate also is a beautiful piece of carved ivory work, representing sundry antique legends. The Porter, who is stationed at this gate, is a tall and comely personage, with long and flowing robes, indicating the easiness and affability of his disposition. Beside him stands a mighty bowl of wine, wherewith he gratifies the guests as they enter the garden. Sir Guyon disdains the pretended courtesy, and overthrows the bowl.

Passing this outer gate, Sir Guyon and the Palmer enter an immense enclosure. It is a large and spacious plain of extraordinary fertility of soil and mildness of climate. Just as the reader begins to think it the most sweet and beautiful landscape he has ever seen, he comes to a second and inner enclosure, containing the garden itself. Sir Guyon, not daring to dwell even in thought upon the beauties



around him, passes on to the gate which leads to this inner garden. This gate or porch, and its portress, must needs detain us a moment.

So fashionéd a porch with rare device,  
Arched overhead with an embracing vine,  
Whose bunches hanging down seemed to entice  
All passers-by to taste their luscious wine,  
And did themselves into their hands incline,  
As freely offering to be gatheréd;  
Some deep empurpled as the hyacine,  
Some as the rubin laughing sweetly red,  
Some like fair emeralds, not yet well ripenéd:

And them amongst some were of burnished gold,  
So made by art to beautify the rest,  
Which did themselves amongst the leaves enfold,  
As lurking from the view of covetous guest,  
That the weak boughs with so rich load oppressed  
Did bow adown as overburdenéd.  
Under that porch a comely Dame did rest  
Clad in fair weeds but foul disorderéd,  
And garments loose that seemed unmeet for womanhed:\*

In her left hand a cup of gold she held,  
And with her right the riper fruit did reach,  
Whose sappy liquor, that with fulness swelled,  
Into her cup she scrused† with dainty breach  
Of her fine fingers, without foul empeach,  
That so fair winepress made the wine more sweet;  
Thereof she used to give to drink to each,  
Whom passing by she happenéd to meet:  
It was her guise all strangers goodly so to greet.

So she to Guyon offered it to taste;  
Who, taking it out of her tender hand,  
The cup to ground did violently cast,  
That all in pieces it was broken found,

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\* *Womanhed*, womanhood.

† *Scrused*, squeezed, crushed.

And with the liquor stained all the land :  
Whereat Excess exceedingly was wroth,  
Yet no'te\* the same amend, ne yet withstand,  
But suffered him to pass, all were she loth ;  
Who, nought regarding her displeasure, forward go'th.

Passing then this portal, they enter the garden  
itself.

There the most dainty paradise on ground  
Itself doth offer to his sober eye,  
In which all pleasures plenteously abound,  
And none does other's happiness envy ;  
The painted flowers ; the trees upshooting high ;  
The dales for shade ; the hills for breathing space ;  
The trembling groves ; the crystal running by ;  
And, that which all fair works doth most aggrace,  
The art, which all that wrought, appeared in no place.

And in the midst of all a fountain stood,  
Of richest substance that on earth might be,  
So pure and shiny that the silver flood  
Through every channel running one might see ;  
Most goodly it with curious imagery  
Was over-wrought, and shapes of naked boys,  
Of which some seemed with lively jollity  
To fly about, playing their wanton toys,  
Whilst others did themselves embay in liquid joys.

And over all of purest gold was spread  
A trail of ivy in his native hue ;  
For the rich metal was so colouréd,  
That wight, who did not well avised it view,  
Would surely deem it to be ivy true :  
Low his lascivious arms adown did creep,  
That themselves dipping in the silver dew  
Their fleecy flowers they fearfully did steep,  
Which drops of crystal seemed for wantonness to weep.

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\* No'te, could not.

Infinite streams continually did well  
 Out of this fountain, sweet and fair to see,  
 The which into an ample laver fell,  
 And shortly grew to so great quantity,  
 That like a little lake it seemed to be;  
 Whose depth exceeded not three cubits' height,  
 That through the waves one might the bottom see,  
 All paved beneath with jasper shining bright,  
 That seemed the fountain in that sea did sail upright.

In this little lakelet, surrounded with a thick margin of shade trees, are seen two naked damsels bathing. Their gambols in the water are described with a liveliness and warmth of colouring surpassing any description even in Spenser.

*The Knight slackens his pace.*

On which when gazing him the Palmer saw,  
 He much rebuked those wandering eyes of his,  
 And counselled well him forward thence did draw.  
 Now are they come nigh to the Bower of Bliss,  
 Of her fond favourites so named amiss;  
 When thus the Palmer: "Now, Sir, well advise:  
 For here the end of all our travel is:  
 Here wons ACRASIA, whom we must surprise,  
 Else she will slip away, and all our drift despise."

We are now, then, near the centre of the inner garden, and *there*, right before us, stands the Bower of Bliss.

Eftsoons they heard a most melodious sound,  
 Of all that might delight a dainty ear,  
 Such as at once might not on living ground,  
 Save in this paradise, be heard elsewhere:  
 Right hard it was for wight which did it hear,  
 To read what manner music that might be;  
 For all that pleasing is to living ear  
 Was there consorted in one harmony;  
 Birds, voices, instruments, winds, waters, all agree:

The joyous birds, shrouded in cheerful shade,  
 Their notes unto the voice attempered sweet;  
 Th' angelical soft trembling voices made  
 To th' instruments divine response meet;  
 The silver-sounding instruments did meet  
 With the base murmur of the water's fall;  
 The water's fall with difference discreet,  
 Now soft, now loud, unto the wind did call;  
 The gentle warbling wind low answeréd to all.

Within this matchless Bower, from which such  
 enchanting music is heard, is the fair witch herself.  
 She has with her a new lover, a gentle boy whom she  
 has enticed to her bower, and has just laid a slumber-  
 ing in secret shade.

And all that while right over him she hung  
 With her false eyes fast fixéd in his sight,  
 As seeking medicine whence she was stung,  
 Or greedily depasturing delight;  
 And oft inclining down with kisses light,  
 For fear of waking him, his lips bedewed,  
 And through his humid eyes did suck his sprite,  
 Quite molten into lust and pleasure lewd;  
 Wherewith she sighéd soft, as if his case she rued.

The whilst some one did chant this lovely lay;  
*Ah! see, whoso fair thing dost fain to see,  
 In springing flower the image of thy day!  
 Ah! see the virgin rose, how sweetly she  
 Doth first peep forth with bashful modesty,  
 That fairer seems the less ye see her may!  
 Lo! see soon after how more bold and free  
 Her baréd bosom she doth broad display;  
 Lo! see soon after how she fades and falls away!*

*So passeth, in the passing of a day,  
 Of mortal life the leaf, the bud, the flower;  
 Ne more doth flourish after first decay,  
 That erst was sought to deck both bed and bower  
 Of many a lady and many a paramour!*

*Gather therefore the rose whilst yet is prime,  
 For soon comes age that will her pride deflour :  
 Gather the rose of love whilst yet is time,  
 Whilst loving thou mayest loved be with equal crime.*

The Knight and the Palmer, aware that their only chance of success lies in a surprise, approach warily and silently. Through the openings of the leafy Bower, they see the inmates.

The young man, sleeping by her, seemed to be  
 Some goodly swain of honourable place ;  
 That certes it great pity was to see  
 Him his nobility so foul deface :  
 A sweet regard and amiable grace,  
 Mixéd with manly sternness, did appear,  
 Yet sleeping, in his well-proportioned face ;  
 And on his tender lips the downy hair  
 Did now but freshly spring, and silken blossoms bear.

His warlike arms, the idle instruments  
 Of sleeping praise, were hung upon a tree ;  
 And his brave shield, full of old moniments,  
 Was foully rased, that none the signs might see ;  
 Ne for them, ne for honour caréd he ;  
 Ne ought that did to his advancement tend,  
 But in lewd loves, and wasteful luxury,  
 His days, his goods, his body he did spend :  
 O horrible enchantment, that him so did blend !

But let us drop the curtain.

The Palmer had brought for the purpose a subtle net, which was suddenly thrown over the guilty pair. Once captured, Acrasia is bound in chains of adamant. The youth, Verdant, is set at liberty,—with good advice.

The noble Elf and careful Palmer drew  
 So nigh them, minding nought but lustful game,



That sudden forth they on them rushed, and threw  
A subtle net, which only for that same  
The skilful Palmer formerly did frame:  
So held them under fast; the whilst the rest  
Fled all away for fear of fouler shame.  
The fair Enchantress, so unware oppressed,  
Tried all her arts and all her sleights thence out to wrest;

And eke her lover strove; but all in vain:  
For that same net so cunningly was wound,  
That neither guile nor force might it distract.  
They took them both, and both them strongly bound  
In captive bands, which there they ready found:  
But her in chains of adamant he tied;  
For nothing else might keep her safe and sound:  
But Verdant (so he hight) he soon untied,  
And counsel sage instead thereof to him applied.

But all those pleasant bowers, and palace brave,  
Guyon broke down with rigour pitiless;  
Ne ought their goodly workmanship might save  
Them from the tempest of his wrathfulness;  
But that their bliss he turned to balefulness;  
Their groves he felled; their gardens did deface;  
Their arbours spoil; their cabinets suppress;  
Their banquet-houses burn; their buildings rase;  
And, of the fairest late, now made the foulest place.

Such is the Legend of Sir Guyon, or of Temperance.  
Well hath he approved himself a worthy Knight—one  
in whom the appetites, the passions, and the affections  
are all brought into subjection to reason—who pursues  
the even tenor of his way, unseduced by pleasure, un-  
moved by rage, unbought by gain—in whom tem-  
perance is not tameness, nor composure, death—whose  
life is labour, whose end is glory, whose guide is reason,  
whose means are truth—and, finally, who gets an easy  
victory over others, because he has first mastered  
himself.

## BOOK III.

### THE LEGEND OF BRITOMART, OR OF CHASTITY.

Third Book not Periodique—First appearance of Britomart—  
The Enchanted Spear—Flight of Florimel—Britomart and  
Guyon at Castle Joyous—Britomart's History—Combat with  
Marinel—Arthur's Pursuit of Florimel—Night in the Woods  
—Arthur's History—Florimel's History—Timias and the  
Forester—Timias and Belphebe—Characters of Belphebe  
and Amoret—Florimel in the Witch's Hut—The Witch's Son  
—Florimel's Flight and Escape in the Fisherman's Boat—  
The Giantess, Arganté—The Squire of Dames—The Snowy  
Florimel—Florimel rescued from the Fisherman by Proteus  
—Elopement of Hellenore with Paridel—Scudamour—  
Amoret in the Enchanted Castle of Busyrane—Rescued by  
Britomart.

THE third Book of the Fairy Queen is entitled  
“The Legend of Britomart, or of Chastity.” Those  
of my readers who have followed me through the ex-  
position of the legend of Temperance, will readily  
understand that, in like manner, in the illustration of  
the principle of Chastity, the author does not limit his  
view to a single aspect of the subject, but takes a  
wide and comprehensive survey of a numerous class  
of affiliated virtues and their corresponding vices. I  
do not purpose to follow the author in his delineation  
of all the protean forms of this important element of  
human character. All that I shall attempt will be to  
delineate particular scenes and characters, and to  
make these sketches intelligible by giving briefly the  
thread of the whole story.

The third Book is at once better and worse than its predecessors. It surpasses both the preceding in the number and excellence of individual scenes. At the same time, it lacks unity of subject and interest, which detracts from its merit as a whole. The nominal heroine is Britomart. But she shares the interest almost equally with several others, both men and women. The main action, moreover, is not brought to a close in this Book, but is carried forward into the fourth Book. If the commentary, therefore, in the present chapter is not entirely *periodique*, the reader is requested not to throw all the blame on the mere commentator. Not finding unity in the original, I do not feel at liberty to make it; but shall follow the example of the author, and give a series of pictures, where I cannot get a complete story.

Spenser excels in his female characters. He possessed not only the genius requisite for the successful delineation of character generally, but in a special manner, that goodness of heart, without which there can be no proper appreciation of the mystery of woman. The woman who is about to appear upon the scene, occupies a prominent place in the general plot of the poem. She is introduced to the reader under the following circumstances.

After relieving Alma from her besiegers, and capturing Acrasia in the Bower of Bliss, Prince Arthur and Sir Guyon are seen travelling together from country to country in search of adventure, when at last they meet upon an open plain an armed Knight and an aged Squire. The stranger Knight, who bears upon his shield a lion passant, begins to address himself immediately for fight. Sir Guyon beseeches the

Prince to leave that adventure to him. The combatants put their spears in rest, and dash forward towards each other. They meet. Each one's spear strikes his antagonist, but with different effect. Guyon drives so furiously, it seems his spear will rive both shield and breast-plate. Still it does not, nor does it even move his antagonist from his seat, although it makes him stagger somewhat. But Guyon himself, ere he is aware, finds himself standing on the ground, nigh a spear's length behind his crouper!

Ah! gentlest Knight, that ever armour bore,  
Let not thee grieve dismounted to have been,  
And brought to ground, that never wast before;  
'Twas not thy fault, but secret power unseen:  
That spear *enchanted* was, which laid thee on the green.

Poor Guyon's mortification would have been indefinitely increased, had he known that his antagonist was a *woman*. It is indeed the famous female Knight, BRITOMART, the heroine of the third Book, whom we now see for the first time. Not knowing, however, the true state of the case, Sir Guyon draws his sword and comes stoutly forward on foot, ready for close conflict. But the wary Palmer sees at once the danger.—For well he knows,

“That Death sits on the point of that enchanted spear.”

By his interposition and reasoning, therefore, and those of the Prince, Sir Guyon is content to put up his sword, and is reconciled, first with himself, and then with the stranger Knight. The two not only are reconciled, but enter into a close alliance, offensive and defensive, and travel on together in quest of adventure.



O, goodly usage of those antique times,  
In which the sword was servant unto right ;  
When not for malice and contentious crimes,  
But all for praise, and proof of manly might,  
The martial brood accusoméd to fight.

While Arthur, Guyon, and Britomart are thus travelling together, they come at length into a wide forest, where no sign of living creature is to be seen, save the occasional track of the wild boar, the lion, or other savage beast.

*But what is that ?*

All suddenly, out of the thickest of the wood, upon a milk-white palfrey, alone, a goodly LADY rushes past, close in front of our party. Her face seems clear as crystal, and yet through fear as white as ivory. Her garments are wrought of beaten gold. Her steed, all shining in his caparisons, flees past so nimbly, one can scarce give the exquisite creature a leisurely look. She bends her eye backward as she flies, and her fair golden locks stream loosely in the wind. With good reason does she look back so intently, for there, in the opposite direction, comes her pursuer—a coarse, brawny forester.

His wearied jade he fiercely forth doth push,  
Through thick and thin, both over bank and bush,  
In hope her to attain by hook or crook,  
That from his gory sides the blood doth gush ;  
Large are his limbs, and terrible his look,  
And in his clownish hand a sharp boar-spear he shook.

This beautiful and perplexing apparition, who has thus crossed our track, is FLORIMEL. Her name, (meaning *flowers* and *honey*), indicates truly that union of sweetness and delicacy which resides in her



person. It breathes of the freshness at once of Flora and Sylva, and those unstudied graces which spring from nature, rather than those which result from cultivated and artificial life.

I do not mean to say that Arthur and Guyon thus stop to analyze her character. They merely see a delicately beautiful woman fleeing from one who evidently pursues her with ungentle purpose. There is, in such a case, it may well be believed, no time lost in settling questions of precedence. With the quickness of instinct, Prince and Knight both spur instantly after the beautiful vision, each in the hope to rescue her from shame, and to gain for himself the favour of so fair a dame.

Britomart, thus suddenly forsaken of her new friends (who, it seems, know nothing yet of her real character, but suppose her to be a veritable Knight), goes forward on her way alone, as before, conscious equally of her powers, and of the rectitude of her intentions.

Ne evil thing she feared, ne evil thing she meant.

She has not wandered far, before she comes to a goodly castle, pleasantly situated, with a forest on one side and a plain on the other. On this plain, in view of the castle, she sees six Knights striving against one. This one, however, holds his ground, though wounded and almost spent. Still,

He stoutly dealt his blows, and every way,  
To which he turnéd in his wrathful stound,  
Made them recoil, and fly from dread decay,  
That none of all the six before him durst assay:  
Like dastard curs, that, having at a bay

The savage beast embossed in weary chase,  
 Dare not adventure on the stubborn prey,  
 Ne bite *before*, but run from place to place,  
 To get a snatch, when turnéd is his face.

Britomart immediately interferes to demand fair play, calling to the six to forbear. They pay no attention to the demand, but encircle their adversary with fresh assaults. Whereupon Britomart forces her way through the ring, and compels them to pause. The one Knight then explains, that these six are trying to compel him to change his lady-love, and serve another dame; that, rather than thus to wrong the lady whom he has chosen, he has resolved to die.

“For I love one, the truest one on ground,  
 For whose dear sake full many a bitter stound  
 I have endured, and tasted many a bloody wound.”

The Knight who utters this sentiment is the same that on opening the Fairy Queen was first introduced to the reader, “pricking on the plain,” the gentle and well-approved Knight of the Red-Cross. I need not say whose love it is he refuses to forego.

Britomart tries to shame the six Knights, not only for engaging in so unequal a combat, but for attempting to induce a true Knight to give up his lady-love:

All loss is less, and less the infamy,  
 Than loss of love to him that loves but one—

And as to *compelling* a man to love another against his will, such a thing is not written in all the code of Cupid.

Ne may love be compelled by *mastery*;  
 For, soon as mastery comes, sweet Love anon  
 Taketh his nimble wings, and soon away is gone.

The six Knights then explain, that they are the servants and champions of the peerless lady who dwells within the adjoining castle; and that she has imposed upon them, and they have freely accepted this service, namely, to compel every Knight who should pass that way, if he be without a lady-love, to choose her for his mistress, and if he already have one, to desert his own for this. The explanation, so far from being satisfactory, determines Britomart to espouse fully the cause of Saint George. Immediately then the contest is renewed. Ere they are well aware, by the aid of that mysterious spear, she has unhorsed three of the six, and the Red-Cross Knight has unhorsed a fourth, leaving but two to two. These two thereupon yield without farther contest.

The whole company, victors and vanquished, then enter the castle, whose hospitable doors are open to receive the strangers. This habitation is Castle Joyous; the lady to whom it belongs, is Malecasta (incontinence); the six Knights who serve her, and who endeavour to compel the service of others, are Gardanté (ogler), Parlanté (prater), Jocanté (jester), Bascianté (kisser), Bacchanté (drinker), Noctanté (reveller). The two stranger Knights are entertained with great state and splendour in Castle Joyous. The chamber of audience and the other apartments, are filled with gay troops of damsels and squires; there is no lack of banqueting and jolly cheer:

And all the while sweet Music did divide  
Her looser notes with Lydian harmony:  
And all the while sweet birds thereto applied  
Their dainty lays and dulcet melody.

The walls of the apartment are decorated with most

lifelike embroidery, representing the loves of Venus and Adonis. Nothing in short is wanting that may affect the senses or the imagination, and incline the heart to unmanly softness. The description of these luxurious scenes occupies the rest of the first Canto, and possesses great warmth of colouring.

Castle Joyous and its inmates, however, find no response in the noble-hearted Red-Cross Knight. *The man that truly and purely loves one woman, has the strongest earthly safeguard against temptation.* Besides, beauty of face and person was meant by nature merely as the index of indwelling purity of heart. Where this union is found on trial not to exist, disappointment and disgust are the necessary results. The beautiful Malecasta, with a face and person capable of ravishing the eye of the beholder, yet by her ungente behaviour, merely disgusts her pure-minded guests; and at early dawn, Britomart and Saint George take their leave, as we do now, of Castle Joyous.

They travel forth together accompanied by their squires. The Red-Cross Knight at Castle Joyous had accidentally discovered the sex of Britomart. This does not, however, prevent their entertaining for each other a solid and rational friendship: and Saint George has already disclosed his love for the Lady Una, a fealty which he would no more betray for Britomart than for Malecasta. He loves but only one, to whom, since that first estrangement, he has ever been as true as needle to the pole. Sudden acquaintances, however, formed in the moment of danger, ripen very rapidly into intimacy. The strangers of yesterday are not only sworn friends, but even Britomart has already confessed to Saint George a secret flame which she



would not have allowed her own sister to guess. Yes! She, the haughty and imperious dame, whose heart seemed cased in steel more hard and stubborn than that which enclosed her person, is all the while the victim of a romantic passion, and for a Knight too that she has never seen. The honest bearing of the Red-Cross Knight has been the "open sesame" to her heart, and she has told him her whole story with the simplicity of a child. It is too long to quote, but I will give the outline.

Britomart was the only daughter of her father, the King of Wales. Merlin, the great Magician, had made for this King a Magic Mirror, in which he could see both the distant and the future. No foe could ever attack his kingdom unawares, because the King always saw them in his mirror, long ere they approached the border. Britomart had been a sort of "Die Vernon" in her time, and had given Dan Cupid bold defiance. But happening to stroll one day into her father's closet, she took it into her head to look into this wondrous mirror, which could bring into the field of vision whatever scene the wishes, interests, or circumstances of the beholder might happen to suggest. It is difficult to analyze the subtle essences which compose a young maiden's heart. Whether Britomart was governed by anything more than mere idle curiosity, it is impossible to say. The idea of a *husband* surely had never yet occupied her thoughts. But yet, as she gazed in the mirror, there came before her, in the distance, the vision of a Knight, of whom an elaborate description is given. It was the portrait of one whom she had never seen.



Upon his shield was the name ARTEGAL. That was all she knew, or could learn of him.

Thenceforth the feather in her lofty crest,  
Rufféd of Love 'gan lowly to avale ;\*  
And her proud portance and her princely gest,  
With which she erst triumphéd, now did quail :  
Sad, solemn, sour, and full of fancies frail,  
She waxed ; yet wist she neither how, nor why ;  
She wist not, silly Maid, what she did ail,  
Yet wist she was not well at ease perdy ;  
Yet thought it was not love, but some melánccholy.

So soon as night had with her pallid hue  
Defaced the beauty of the shining sky,  
And reft from men the world's desiréd view,  
She with her nurse adown to sleep did lie ;  
But sleep full far away from her did fly :  
Instead thereof sad sighs and sorrows deep  
Kept watch and ward about her warily ;  
That nought she did but wail, and often steep  
Her dainty couch with tears which closely she did weep.

And if that any drop of slumb'ring rest  
Did chance to still into her weary sprite,  
When feeble nature felt herself opprest,  
Straightway with dreams, and with fantastic sight  
Of dreadful things, the same was put to flight ;  
That oft out of her bed she did astart,  
As one with view of ghastly fiends affright :  
Then gan she to renew her former smart,  
And think of that fair visage written in her heart.

Henceforth the quiet of her breast is disturbed. She is in love with a mere shadow. But shadow implies substance, and the shadow of Artegal, seen in the mirror, has its representative in a real Artegal somewhere, in or out of Fairy Land. At last, under

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\* *Avale*, sink.

the advice of Merlin, whose cave she visits, she resolves to go forth, equipped as a Knight, in quest of the unknown and noble stranger whom she has seen in the mirror. This is the sum of Britomart's story, which occupies the second and third Cantos.

The Red-Cross Knight, to whom she communicated it, knew Artegal very well, and gave her such a glowing description of his person and his noble qualities, as filled her with a lively rapture. The friends at length are obliged to part, Saint George to go in quest of his own adventure, and Britomart in quest of Artegal, of whom she had now received full information. It is not difficult to divine her thoughts as she wandered forth alone.

She all the way  
Grew pensive through that amorous discourse,  
By which the Red-Cross Knight did erst display  
Her lover's shape and chivalrous array :  
A thousand thoughts she fashioned in her mind,  
And in her feigning fancy did portray  
Him, such as she fittest for love could find,  
Wise, warlike, personable, courteous, and kind.

Thinking thus of Artegal, and wandering along the sea-shore, disconsolate and sad, she meets a Knight, Sir Marinel, the son of a Sea Nymph, who challenges her farther progress. A combat ensues.

Eftsoons her goodly shield addressing fair,  
'That mortal spear she in her hand did take,  
And unto battle did herself prepare.  
The Knight approaching, sternly her bespake :  
" Sir Knight, that dost thy voyage rashly make  
By this forbidden way in my despite,  
Ne dost by others' death ensample take ;

I read thee soon retire, whilst thou hast might,  
Lest afterwards it be too late to take thy flight."

Ythrilled with deep disdain of his proud threat,  
She shortly thus: "Fly they, that need to fly;  
Words fearen babes: I mean not thee entreat  
To pass; but maugre thee will pass or die:"  
Ne longer stayed for th' other to reply,  
But with sharp spear the rest made dearly known.  
Strongly the strange Knight ran, and sturdily  
Strook her full on the breast, that made her down  
Decline her head, and touch her crouper with her crown.

But she again him in the shield did smite  
With so fierce fury and great puissance,  
That, through his three-square scutcheon piercing quite,  
And through his mailéd hauberque, by mischance  
The wicked steel through his left side did glance:  
Him so transfixéd she before her bore  
Beyond his croup, the length of all her lance;  
Till, sadly sousing on the sandy shore,  
He tumbled on an heap, and wallowed in his gore.

Like as the sacred ox, that careless stands  
With gilded horns and flowery garlands crowned,  
Proud of his dying honour and dear bands,  
Whilst th' altars fume with frankincense around,  
All suddenly with mortal stroke astound,  
Doth grovelling fall, and with his streaming gore  
Distains the pillars and the holy ground,  
And the fair flowers that deckéd him afore:  
So fell proud Marinel upon the Precious Shore.

A long and beautiful episode ensues, giving the history of Marinel. The story is too long to be inserted here, but it will be referred to hereafter. The reader will please not forget the circumstance, as upon it depends the fate of one of our principal female characters.

Leaving the corse of Marinel upon the strand,

leaving also Britomart to pursue her course,—and wishing her success,—let us return and inquire about some of the rest of our party.

Britomart, it will be recollected, had been separated from her companions by the apparition of the fleet and beautiful Florimel. Arthur and Guyon on that occasion both started in pursuit of the damsel; but Timias, the noble Squire of Prince Arthur, pursued the rude forester, whose odious and ungente intentions had so frightened the beautiful creature. The forester changed his course, which separated the Squire from his Prince; the Prince and Guyon, in pursuit of Florimel, came to a cross-road which separated them, Guyon taking one path, Arthur the other.

Arthur by chance takes the right path, and at last gains sight of the damsel. So thoroughly, however, has she been frightened, that she makes no distinction between her foe and her deliverer. She continues to flee from Arthur, as she had done from the brawny forester.

Aloud to her he oftentimes did call  
To do away vain doubt and needless dread :  
Full mild to her he spake, and oft let fall  
Many meek words to stay and comfort her withal.  
But nothing might relent\* her hasty flight :  
So deep the deadly fear of that foul swain  
Was erst impresséd in her gentle sprite.

Nor was it that she supposed herself still pursued by the rude forester. She often looked back, and knew well the change in her pursuer :

Yet she no less the Knight feared than that villain rude.

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\* *Relent*, retard.



Poor Florimel! Thou art not alone in thy apprehensions. Thou art not the only trembler, whom threatened outrage from one has inspired with an unjust fear of all.

Arthur pursues the fleeting vision in vain. Night comes on, and he loses sight of her. He turns loose his steed to forage upon the grass and shrubs, and he himself, far from human abode, spends the night alone in the woods, the overhanging trees his canopy, the turf his pillow. Night, under any circumstances, but especially night alone in the midst of a trackless forest, might well dispose to reflection. Arthur, though weary, slept not. Both his curiosity and his compassion had been wrought to the highest pitch by the mystery of this fleeting damsel. And then, the thoughts of her, brought to his recollection the thought of another and a brighter, and of the circumstance which first sent him forth in quest of adventure. He recalls, with as much distinctness as in the night on which he first saw it, that vision of loveliness which had fired his imagination. Arthur's experience had been in some respects like Britomart's. He was the son of a King, but at this time ignorant of his lineage. He had been taken from his mother immediately after birth, and delivered to an old Knight to be reared and educated. He had learned from the magician Merlin that his lineage was *rôyal*, but of what race he was not informed. Arthur had no magic mirror to look into, but he dreamed a dream, which revealed equally well the state of his mind. He, too, had been a contemner of Cupid. But once, by night, he saw in a dream a vision of glorious beauty that completely ravished him with delight. The lady of his dream told him, just



before melting into thin air, her name was Gloriana; she was the Queen of Fairydom; and her love should be his, if duly sought. On waking, he resolved to explore all lands, until he could find and woo the prototype of the heavenly beauty seen in his dream. He has been a year or more engaged in this pursuit. And now, while lying alone this night in the forest, he recurs to his previous life. The thought suggests itself, that possibly Florimel may be the Gloriana of his dreams. The reader indeed knows better, but Arthur does not, and he is vexed that, just as he was beginning to gain upon her, night came on, and by its darkness stopped farther pursuit. He thereupon vents his dislike for this part of the twenty-four hours, in no very measured terms.

“Night! thou foul mother of annoyance sad,  
Sister of heavy Death, and nurse of Wo,  
Which was begot in heaven, but for thy bad  
And brutish shape thrust down to hell below,  
Where, by the grim flood of Cocytus slow,  
Thy dwelling is in Erebus’ black house,  
(Black Erebus, thy husband, is the foe  
Of all the gods), where thou ungracious  
Half of thy days dost lead in horror hideous:

“What had th’ Eternal Maker need of thee  
The world in his continual course to keep,  
That dost all things deface, ne lettest see  
The beauty of his work? Indeed in sleep  
The slothful body that doth love to steep  
His lustless limbs, and drown his baser mind,  
Doth praise thee oft, and oft from Stygian deep  
Calls thee his goddess, in his error blind,  
And great dame Nature’s handmaid cheering every kind.

“But well I wot that to an heavy heart  
Thou art the root and nurse of bitter cares,

Breeder of new, renewer of old smarts :  
 Instead of rest thou lendest railing\* tears ;  
 Instead of sleep thou sendest troublous fears  
 And dreadful visions, in the which alive  
 The dreary image of sad Death appears :  
 So from the weary spirit thou dost drive  
 Desiréd rest, and men of happiness deprive.

“ Under thy mantle black there hidden lie  
 Light-shunning Theft, and traitorous Intent,  
 Abhorred Bloodshed, and vile Felony,  
 Shameful Deceit, and Danger imminent,  
 Foul Horror, and eke hellish Dreariment :  
 All these I wot in thy protection be,  
 And light do shun, for fear of being shent : †  
 For light ylike is loathed of them and thee ;  
 And all that lewdness love, do hate the light to see.

Prince Arthur, renewing the pursuit next morning, meets a Dwarf, who had been the attendant of Florimel, and had been separated from her. From the Dwarf, Arthur learns Florimel's true character and history. She was one of the ladies of the Court of Fäery, who, though loved by many, loved but one, and that one, Sir Marinel, did not return her passion. Sir Marinel was reputed to be dead, slain by some stranger Knight, and left upon the strand. Soon after this news had reached the Court, fair Florimel was inquired for, but was nowhere to be found. It was supposed she had gone in search of the corse of the cruel Marinel. The Dwarf had been sent in pursuit of her,—and met with Arthur. The two then pursue the fugitive together.

When Prince Arthur first started in pursuit of Florimel, it will be recollected, his Squire Timias followed after the rude forester. In this pursuit he

\* *Railing*, trickling down.

† *Shent*, shamed.

encountered an adventure of his own, quite as remarkable as that of the Prince. This adventure, which occupies most of the fifth canto, and all of the sixth, cannot be passed over entirely, because it serves to introduce some of the author's most splendid female characters.

The Squire, resolving not to let the rude forester escape, followed close after him, until they came into the very thickest part of a close and entangled forest. The forester, who was acquainted with all the windings and secret paths of the wood, led him near to the abode of his two brothers. There all three of these savage, brawny fellows assailed the Squire at once. He overcame and killed them all, but was grievously wounded himself.

He lives, but takes small joy of his renown ;  
For of that cruel wound he bled so sore,  
That from his steed he fell in deadly swoon :  
Yet still the blood forth gushed in so great store,  
That he lay wallowed all in his own gore.  
Now God thee keep ! thou gentlest Squire alive,  
Else shall thy loving Lord thee see no more.

Fear not for this gentle Squire. Eternal Providence, which rescued Una in the time of her deep distress, will not let him perish in this unworthy manner. The wood in which he is lying is that in which, in the previous book, we saw that brilliant phenomenon, the huntress Belphebe. On this day, led beyond her companions in the eager pursuit of some wild beast, she penetrated into the deepest recesses of the forest, and found at last a track marked with blood.

Shortly she came whereas that woful Squire  
With blood deforméd lay in deadly swoond ;  
In whose fair eyes, like lamps of quenched fire,  
The crystal humour stood congealéd round ;  
His locks, like faded leaves fallen to ground,  
Knotted with blood in bunches rudely ran ;  
And his sweet lips, on which before that stound  
The bud of youth to blossom fair began,  
Spoiled of their rosy red were waxen pale and wan.

Saw never living eye more heavy sight,  
That could have made a rock of stone to rue,  
Or rive in twain : which when that Lady bright,  
Beside all hope, with melting eyes did view,  
All suddenly abashed she changéd hue,  
And with stern horror backward gan to start :  
But, when she better him beheld, she grew  
Full of soft passion and unwonted smart :  
The point of pity piercéd through her tender heart.

Meekly she bowéd down, to weet if life  
Yet in his frozen members did remain ;  
And, feeling by his pulse's beating rife  
That the weak soul her seat did yet retain,  
She cast to comfort him with busy pain :  
His double-folded neck she reared upright,  
And rubbed his temples and each trembling vein ;  
His mailed habergeon she did undight,  
And from his head his heavy burganet did light.

Belphebe, hastening to gather some medicinal herbs, and bruising them between two stones, squeezed out the juice thereof between her two lily hands into his wound, and then bound it up with her scarf. Under the influence of her remedies, life began to return to its wonted seat ; and, heaving a deep groan, he opened at last his eyes. What a picture ! As he had been lying upon his back, his eyes on opening were of course directed upward. But between him



and the sky, was an intervening object. The eyes of the awakening man rested, not upon the heaven, but upon an object equally pure, clear, and bright—a face which, even in ordinary circumstances, might well be mistaken for that of an angel !

“ Mercy ! dear Lord,” said he, “ what grace is this  
That thou hast showed to me sinful wight,  
To send thine Angel from her bower of bliss  
To comfort me in my distressed plight !  
Angel, or Goddess do I call thee right ?  
What service may I do unto thee meet,  
That hast from darkness me returned to light,  
And with thy heavenly salves and med’cines sweet  
Hast dressed my sinful wounds ! I kiss thy blessed feet.”

Belpheobe, blushing, informs him that she is neither an angel nor a goddess, but simply a maiden, the daughter of a wood-nymph, and declines any requital for her kindness beyond the consciousness of having done it.

Her maidens, having by this time arrived, assisted in conveying the wounded boy to the secret sylvan retreat of their mistress.

Thither they brought that wounded Squire, and laid  
In easy couch his feeble limbs to rest.  
He rested him awhile ; and then the Maid  
His ready wound with better salves new dressed :  
Daily she dressed him, and did the best,  
His grievous hurt to guarish, that she might ;  
That shortly she his dolour hath redressed,  
And his foul sore reduced to fair plight :  
It she reduced, but himself destroyed quite.

O foolish physie, and unfruitful pain,  
That heals up one, and makes another wound !  
She his hurt thigh to him recured again,  
But hurt his heart, the which before was sound,



Through an unwary dart which did rebound  
 From her fair eyes and gracious countenance.  
 What boots it him from death to be unbound,  
 To be captivéd in endless durance  
 Of sorrow and despair without aleggeance!\*

Still as his wound did gather, and grow whole,  
 So still his heart waxed sore, and health decayed :  
 Madness, to save a part, and lose the whole !  
 Still whenas he beheld the heavenly Maid,  
 Whilst daily plasters to his wound she laid,  
 So still his malady the more increased,  
 The whilst her matchless beauty him dismayed.  
 Ah God ! what other could he do at least,  
 But love so fair a Lady that his life released !

Long while he strove in his courageous breast  
 With reason due the passion to subdue,  
 And love for to dislodge out of his nest ;  
 Still when her excellencies he did view,  
 Her sovereign bounty and celestial hue,  
 The same to love he strongly was constrained :  
 But, when his mean estate he did review,  
 He from such hardy boldness was restrained,  
 And of his luckless lot and cruel love thus plained :

“ Unthankful wretch,” said he, “ is this the meed,  
 With which her sovereign mercy thou dost quite ?  
 Thy life she savéd by her gracious deed ;  
 But thou dost ween with villanous despite  
 To blot her honour and her heavenly light :  
 Die ; rather die, than so disloyally  
 Deem of her high desert, or seem so light :  
 Fair death it is, to shun more shame, to die :  
 Die ; rather die, than ever love disloyally.

“ But if, to love, disloyalty it be,  
 Shall I then hate her that from deathés door  
 Me brought ?—Ah ! far be such reproach from me !  
 What can I less do than her love therefore,

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\* *Aleggeance*, alleviation.

Since I her due reward cannot restore?  
Die; rather die, and dying do her serve;  
Dying her serve, and living her adore;  
Thy life she gave, thy life she doth deserve;  
Die; rather die, than ever from her service swerve.

“ But, foolish boy, what boots thy service base  
To her, to whom the heavens do serve and sue?  
Thou, a mean Squire of meek and lowly place;  
She, heavenly born and of celestial hue.  
How then?—Of all Love taketh equal view:  
And doth not Highest God vouchsafe to take  
The love and service of the basest crew?  
If she will not: die meekly for her sake:  
Die; rather die, than ever so fair love forsake!”

Thus warréd he long time against his will;  
Till that through weakness he was forced at last  
To yield himself unto the mighty ill,  
Which, as a victor proud, gan ransack fast  
His inward parts, and all his entrails waste,  
That neither blood in face nor life in heart  
It left, but both did quite dry up and blast;  
As piercing levin,\* which the inner part  
Of everything consumes and calcineth by art.

Which seeing, fair Belphebe gan to fear  
Lest that his wound were inly well not healed,  
Or that the wicked steel empoisoned were;  
Little she weened that love he close concealed.  
Yet still he wasted as the snow congealed  
When the bright sun his beams thereon doth beat:  
Yet never he his heart to her revealed;  
But rather chose to die for sorrow great,  
Than with dishonourable terms her to entreat.

She, gracious Lady, yet no pains did spare  
To do him ease, or do him remedy:  
Many restoratives of virtues rare,  
And costly cordials she did apply,

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\* *Levin*, lightning.

To mitigate his stubborn malady :  
But that sweet cordial which can restore  
A love-sick heart, she did to him envy ;  
To him, and to all th' unworthy world forlore,  
She did envy that sovereign salve in secret store.

BELPHŒBE is Spenser's idea of absolute virginity—of a being possessing all womanly perfections, except that which is most characteristic—having all the grace and delicacy of her sex, without its dependence—not like Britomart, unloving because she has not seen the right one, or not appearing to others to love because she successfully conceals her feelings:—but one, who can pity the misfortunes or admire the noble qualities of a man, as she would those of a woman ; who does not love, because in the composition of her heart there is no mixture of that subtle element on which love feeds ; whose want of love is not want of feeling, nor the result of disappointment, much less of chagrin ; who can sympathize with the pains and alleviate the distresses of a wounded squire, as she would those of a younger brother ; in whose bosom there is no latent, undeveloped want ; to whose eyes the magic mirror of Merlin would reveal only a group of sisterly nymphs, a medicinal herb, or a wounded deer ; in whose tender and graceful stalk (to vary yet once more the expression), neither the germ has been retarded by late spring, nor the bud blasted by untimely frost, nor the flower already faded and fallen, but its sap, by native constitution, contains only that element which produces branches and leaves—a plant, flowerless indeed, but graceful, unchanging, perennial, green.

Belphebe is not a perfect woman. Her imperfec-

tion, however, is of a kind which makes her more admirable, though less interesting. In proportion as she is less womanly, she is more angelic.

Spenser's devout loyalty to his sovereign, the Virgin Queen, as well as the native bent of his mind, led him to admire beyond bounds such a character as this. He has lavished upon it the riches of his genius with a most profuse and hearty liberality. The birth of Belphebe is one of his master-pieces. He describes this event, in the first place, in a few general terms, which seem to be a sort of ottar of roses, the very quintessence of poetry.

*Her birth was of the womb of morning dew,  
And her conception of the joyous prime ;  
And all her whole creation did her shew,  
Pure and unspotted from all loathly crime  
That is ingenerate in fleshly slime.*

Belphebe had a twin sister, AMORET. The babes had been stolen from their sleeping mother on the day of their birth by two of the Goddesses, and educated separately according to the tastes of their foster-parents. Diana, or Phoebe, the Virgin Goddess, the alma mater of one, made her, as we have just seen her, the peerless virgin, Belphebe. Venus, Goddess of Love, took the other babe, the infant Amoret, to the gardens of Adonis, and caused her to be trained in all the arts and mysteries of perfect womanhood.

By the Amoret of Spenser we are to understand one, whose perfections and imperfections are the counterpart of her sister's; who is both less angelic and more womanly; who is made to love and to be loved; who finds not only her happiness, but her honour and her perfection, in a feeling of dependence



upon another; the rays of whose beauty diffuse warmth as well as light; whose delicacy is not the angular and facial exactness of the diamond, hard, bright, and cutting, but the soft repose of a sunbeam upon a bank of violets; whose love is not the playful and sparkling jet d'eau of the wild Florimel, nor the deep concealed fountain of the haughty Britomart, but a full, broad, generous stream of affection through which pours every energy of her soul. Amoret is a being too earnest to be coy, too confiding to be jealous. She bestows her love, not as a boon to another, but as a necessary gratification to herself. Her love is twice blessed. It blesseth her that gives, and him that takes. Her repose is not inward and within herself, but outward upon another. She experiences a high gratification in knowing that she is loved, but a still higher one in loving. There is in her love a fulness, strength, bounty, simplicity, and entireness, to which one of the very best historical parallels is to be found in the heart of Spenser himself, as poured forth in the Sonnets and the Epithalamium.

But what became of Timias? He was left in circumstances not very favourable, certainly, to his peace of mind. Leaving the gentle Squire, however, for some time longer in the experience of that blissful pain, let us try once more to extricate the fair Florimel from her threatened dangers. They are of a real and most awful kind.

Poor trembler! The heart bleeds to follow her on her hard journey. Neither in mind nor in body has she been trained to the endurance of such fatigue. Britomart has a hardy frame and a vigorous intellect,



which enable her to join the rude encounter, either of wit or of lances, without danger. But it is not so with Florimel. With a bodily frame of exquisite delicacy, and a mind that knows no escape from danger but by flight, behold this child of sensibility and fancy, pursuing her dreary track through the wilderness. The brawny forester has been diverted by the vigilance of Timias. Guyon lost his way at the cross-roads. Arthur was often near enough to make his voice heard, and she saw clearly his noble countenance. But she is in a state of mind incapable of distinguishing friend from foe. One awful idea has taken possession of her soul. Under its influence she presses on—on—on. At last Arthur (who the reader knows would have poured out his life in her defence) in the midst of approaching night among the woods, is lost sight of. Still, she presses forward with a perseverance which would have been entirely beyond the capability of her tender physical frame, but for the unwonted energy derived from powerful excitement. All night she continues that sickening flight. Her noble beast falls exhausted upon the ground, unable to move a foot. Alone, deprived of the companionship even of her generous steed, the gentle creature now goes forward on foot. She sees at length, from the hill-side, a little smoke rising through the tops of the trees from an adjoining valley. Florimel, though in awful fear, is not in despair. Hope still inhabits a small chamber in one corner of her heart. The smoke which so gracefully curls from the tops of those distant trees, brings a ray of gladness even to her forlorn soul. She directs her weary feet to the spot whence that sign of human habitation has issued.

There, in a gloomy hollow glen, she found  
A little cottage, built of sticks and reeds  
In homely wise, and walled with sods around ;  
In which a WITCH did dwell, in loathly weeds  
And wilful want, all careless of her needs.

The Damsel there arriving entered in ;  
Where, sitting on the floor the Hag she found  
Busy (as seemed) about some wicked gin :  
Who, soon as she beheld that sudden stound,  
Lightly upstarted from the dusty ground,  
And with fell look and hollow deadly gaze,  
Staréd on her awhile, as one astound,  
Ne had one word to speak for great amaze.

Poor Florimel ! This was the spot from which that hope-inspiring smoke had so gracefully curled into the sky ; and it has led her, not to the abode of rude hospitality, but to a den of crime, filth, and super-human power. How her heart sinks as she encounters that silent gaze ! Can it be, that Providence has saved her from open violence, only that she may become the prey of secret machinations ? Even the old hag cannot resist that imploring look. Some sparks of woman's nature survive even in her breast, and she allows the forlorn stranger to rest awhile her weary limbs. In the absence of floor or seat of any kind in this miserable hut, Florimel places her dainty limbs upon the filthy ground, and gathers up more closely around her, her disordered and torn garments, and her dishevelled locks. The old witch, seeing the costly gems that glitter from her apparel, and the delicate beauty of her person, so far surpassing all that she has ever before seen, immediately concludes her guest to be some goddess, or other superior being, and changes her manner accordingly.

But let not hope again rise too soon in thy breast, gentle one! The old hag is not the sole occupant of the hut. This wicked woman has a wicked son—a coarse, ignorant, over-grown cub, who has always been too lazy to pursue any regular business—who has no thought except to engorge the food provided for him by his mother—whose only occupation is to sleep, or to stretch himself in the sun on the ground by the hut. Idleness, fulness of bread, and the entire absence of moral and mental cultivation, have made him a type of humanity in its most loathsome condition—brawny and brutish, a being capable of the highest human crime, with the lowest amount of human motive.

The rude Carl was absent from the hut when Florimel first entered. Returning a short time after, and seeing a being of such supernatural beauty, and such queenly apparel, he is at first, like his mother, struck dumb with wonder.

Florimel, seeing the stupid wonder of these ignorant wretches, and finding them disposed to treat her with a rude sort of kindness, the best that they seemed to know how, met their civilities in a corresponding spirit, and condescended to converse with them, so far as she might, in language and on subjects levelled to the current of their ideas. Many days she remained in this doubtful abode. Relieved at length from his first astonishment, and permitted daily to gaze anear upon that ravishing beauty, the witch's son began to entertain for Florimel the only emotion, except rage, of which his beastly nature was capable. The poor panting bird has just begun to recover breath, and to be rested from her fatigue, when her quick eyes see but too evidently the multiplying symptoms of new danger.

The noble steed, which had fallen exhausted shortly before she reached the hut, had recovered strength like herself, and was kept by the witch and her son, as a part of their prize. Awful danger, which sometimes brings upon minds of great delicacy a sort of benumbing stupor, begets at others an almost superhuman activity and keenness. The latter was now the case with Florimel; and early one morning, when the vile hag and her uncivil son awoke, they found, to their amazement, their guest and the steed both missing.

The rage of the idle Carl can be more easily imagined than described. He beat his breast, he scratched his face, he tore his hair, he bit out great lumps of flesh from his body. In vain did his mother try to soothe him. Herbs, charms, tears, talk—all are of no avail. At last, all else failing, she betakes herself to her wicked arts to bring back Florimel to her son's embraces, or to cause her destruction.

Eftsoons, out of her hidden cave she called  
An hideous beast of horrible aspéct,  
That could the stoutest courage have appalled;  
Monstrous, misshaped, and all his back was specked  
With thousand spots of colours quaint elect;\*  
Thereto, so swift, that it all beasts did pass:  
Like never yet did living eye detect;  
But likest it to an hyena was,  
*That feeds on women's flesh, as others feed on grass!*

The hag, having evoked this fearful monster, whose scent after women's blood far surpassed that of the greyhound for the hare, sent it forth with orders, either to bring back the damsel to her frantic son, or

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\* *Quaint elect*, oddly chosen.



to devour her scornful beauty. Poor Florimel, who had been gone some hours, and began to feel safe from pursuit, now sees behind her this ugly monster.

But her fleet palfrey did so well apply  
His nimble feet to her conceivéd fear,  
That whilst his breath did strength to him supply,  
From peril free he her away did bear.

But, alas ! the generous beast begins to flag ; the frightful shape evidently is gaining on them ; and, to cut off all hope, and put an end to flight, they begin to approach the sea. She leaps with the agility of despair from her fainting horse, and continues the hopeless flight on foot. But wherefore ? The waves, even if she is not overtaken sooner, must be the terminus of her flight.

Will God suffer innocence to perish thus ?

Look once more, poor trembler, to that quiet cove. There heaves a little boat, in which an old fisherman lies sound asleep, his nets spread out on the sand to dry. Florimel leaps in, pushes off from shore, and sees the land-monster, not ten leaps behind, raging at the water's edge, at the victim which has escaped his power. Enter that light shallop, gentle reader, and with this forlorn damsel see the ugly shape upon the shore, deprived of his intended victim, turning in fell despite upon the noble horse that had saved her life, and tearing him to pieces before her eyes !

Poor, poor Florimel ! We know that man, in brute strength, is capable of mastery over defenceless woman. We have read in history the horrors of cities given up to a licentious and brutal soldiery. We know, alas ! that the trials of Florimel are an



over true picture of what has often happened in this sad world of woe and crime!

Behold once more the gentle lady, in that dancing shallop, upon the broad ocean, now far from land, and alone, save with her God and that aged fisherman, who still sleeps in the bottom of the boat. But our attention is suddenly called back to the land.

Sir Satyrane, who had fought with Sansloy (in the First Book) in defence of the Lady Una, now reappears, riding along the sea-shore. He had known Florimel in her happy days at Court. Seeing this ugly beast on the shore, the dead horse, marks of blood and violence strewn around, and among the rest the *girdle* of the lady, which had accidentally fallen in her hasty flight, he conjectures that she has fallen a victim to this loathsome monster and been devoured by him. A fierce contest ensues, in which Sir Satyrane finally conquers the monster, though unable to kill him, and binds him with the girdle of Florimel. That delicate riband, the emblem of woman's purity, operates as a charm upon the loathsome creature, and causes him to tremble in every limb, and to follow his captor as a submissive thrall.

Spenser gives no name to this monster, and does not explain its allegorical meaning. A conjecture as to its meaning is offered for what it is worth. The beastly part of man's nature, when seeking its gratification by brute force, and by any cause cheated of its victim, changes to rage, and seeks to kill what it cannot taint. Such, if I err not, has been the secret history of many a dark deed of violence and blood.

Sir Satyrane, riding along the shore, encounters a huge GIANTESS, Arganté by name, who equals in

dimensions the giant Orgoglio, mentioned in a former Book. She is mounted, and carries in her lap, athwart her saddle-bow, a young squire, whom she has captured, and is carrying off to make her thrall. She is pursued by some unknown champion, who is seen in the distance. Sir Satyrane, not waiting for him to come up, himself attacks the Giantess. But she, dropping the squire, gives Satyrane one or two terrible blows, and finally, seizing him by the collar, lifts him fairly off the ground, and is carrying him away in her lap. Her pursuer, having by this time arrived, presses his pursuit so hotly, that she is obliged to drop Sir Satyrane and address herself once more to flight, leaving both her victims upon the ground. Recovering from his fright, Sir Satyrane turns to the squire, from whom we learn the nature and history of this Giantess. The details are disgusting but instructive. Spenser does not explain the allegory, but the meaning is sufficiently obvious. That beastly element of human nature, which in the male sex finds its fitting representative in the shape of the old hag's son, is in the other sex still more odious and revolting;—and finds an appropriate emblem in an overgrown, brawny Giantess, who makes men her prey.

The young squire, whom she was carrying away, is called the "Squire of Dames." His name, too, is some index to his character. His modern representative is the fashionable and well-bred RAKE, who entertaining of woman opinions that dishonour his manhood, lives only to flatter, and flatters only to betray—who calls every woman an angel, while he inwardly believes her, and endeavours to make her, as base as himself. Such a course of life, the poet

would teach us, is no less dangerous than criminal. The bad principles of our nature, like the good ones, grow by indulgence till they get beyond control. The miserable end of a life of guilty dissipation is not inaptly shadowed forth in the condition of the Squire of Dames,—carried away by force in the lap of the brawny Arganté to be the unwilling thrall of her loathsome bower. The only pity is, he was released by the interposition of Sir Satyrane and her unknown pursuer.

When Sir Satyrane stopped to encounter the Giantess, he let go the ugly beast which he had captured. The foul creature, finding itself loose, ran away during the contest and returned to the hut of the old witch, with Florimel's girdle around him. The witch, seeing the girdle, supposed Florimel was devoured, and ran with triumph to her disconsolate son. He, at the sight of it, drew the same inference, but instead of rejoicing, became more desperate than ever. Thereupon the old hag resorted again to her wicked arts, and created a false Florimel of snow, so like the true, that it would be difficult to distinguish them apart. This false Florimel was then apparelled in such garments as the true lady in her hasty flight had left behind, and in the true girdle. The various adventures of this false Florimel are passed by, and we return to the true gentle lady, whom we left alone in the boat on the open sea.

The fisherman, who had been sleeping in the bottom of the boat, at length awoke. On opening his eyes, between waking and sleeping, he saw before him a being of such exquisite beauty as not even in dreams had ever before visited his imagination. He found

himself fully awake, and the vision real and personal. He asked her name, her history, and how she came there. Florimel evaded the questions by pointing to the land, now almost out of sight, and besought him to guide the boat towards the shore. She had been so absorbed with her late dangers, that she had not till that moment thought of the perils of the ocean. She now began to fear a watery grave.

The fisherman, either feeling no danger, or reckless of it under the influence of a new thought which had taken possession of him, replied carelessly that the boat would take care of itself, and fixed his whole attention upon her. The fisherman, I said, was an *old* man. Sixty years had written their marks across his brow. A skin shrivelled by age and by exposure to the weather, coarse untrimmed locks of dirty white, and a grisly beard, did not improve a countenance and features by nature sufficiently forbidding. But what means the kindling fire in that old man's eyes, which glow like two basilisks? Why dwells he with undiverted gaze upon her ravishing countenance, and her snowy skin? Does even age afford no protection to innocence.

The heart sickens at the recital of Florimel's sorrows. Heretofore she had merely feared violence, and fled from its approach. Flight now is impossible. The hard and sinewy hands of that old bad man are laid rudely upon her person. All human help does indeed seem hopeless. But help comes often at a time and from a quarter that we least expect it. Just as we feel ready to join in the shrieks and piteous outcries of the outraged sufferer, behold a new wonder!



It fortunéd, whilst thus she stiffly strove,  
 And the wide sea importunéd long space  
 With shrilling shrieks, PROTEUS abroad did rove,  
 Along the foamy waves driving his finny drove.

Proteus is shepherd of the seas of yore,  
 And hath the charge of Neptune's mighty herd ;  
 An agéd sire with head all frowy hoar,  
 And sprinkled frost upon his dewy beard :  
 Who, when those pitiful outeries he heard  
 Through all the seas so ruefully resound,  
 His chariot swift in haste he hither steered,  
 Which with a team of scaly Phocas bound,  
 Was drawn upon the waves, that foaméd him around ;

And coming to that fisher's wandering boat,  
 That went at will withouten card or sail,  
 He therein saw that irksome sight, which smote  
 Deep indignation and compassion frail  
 Into his heart at once : straight did he hale\*  
 The greedy villain from his hopéd prey,  
 Of which he now did very little fail ;  
 And with his staff, that drives his herd astray,  
 Him beat so sore, that life and sense did much dismay.

The whiles the piteous lady up did rise,  
 Ruffled and foully raid† with filthy soil,  
 And blubbered face with tears of her fair eyes ;  
 Her heart nigh broken was with weary toil,  
 To save herself from that outrageous spoil :  
 But when she lookéd up, to weet what wight  
 Had her from so infámost fact assoiled,  
 For shame, but more for fear of his grim sight,  
 Down in her lap she hid her face, and loudly shrigh†.

Herself not savéd yet from danger dread  
 She thought, but changed from one to other fear :  
 Like as a fearful partridge, that is fled  
 From the sharp hawk which her attackéd near,

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\* *Hale*, haul.

† *Raid*, disfigured.

‡ *Shright*, shrieked.



And falls to ground to seek for succour there,  
Whereas the hungry spaniels she does spy :  
With greedy jaws her ready for to tear :  
In such distress and sad perplexity  
Was Florimel, when Proteus she did see her by.

But he endeavouréd with speeches mild  
Her to recomfort, and accourage bold,  
Bidding her fear no more her foemen vile,  
Nor doubt himself; and who he was her told :  
Yet all that could not from affright her hold,  
Ne to recomfort her at all prevailed ;  
For her faint heart was with the frozen cold  
Benumbed so inly that her wits nigh failed,  
And all her senses with abashment quite were quailed.

Her up betwixt his rugged hands he reared,  
And with his froary lips full softly kissed,  
Whilst the cold icicles from his rough beard  
Droppéd adown upon her ivory breast :  
Yet he himself so busily addressed,  
That her out of astonishment he wrought ;  
And, out of that same fisher's filthy nest  
Removing her, into his chariot brought,  
And there with many gentle terms her fair besought.

But that old lecher, which with bold assault  
That beauty durst presume to violate,  
He cast to punish for his heinous fault :  
Then took he him yet trembling since of late,  
And tied behind his chariot, to aggrate\*  
The Virgin whom he had abused so sore ;  
So dragged him through the waves in scornful state,  
And after cast him up upon the shore ;  
But Florimel with him unto his bower he bore.

His bower is in the bottom of the main,  
Under a mighty rock, gainst which do rave  
The roaring billows in their proud disdain,  
That with the angry working of the wave

---

\* *Aggrate*, gratify.

Therein is eaten out an hollow cave,  
That seems rough mason's hands with engines keen  
Had long while labouréd it to engrave:  
There was his won; ne living wight was seen  
Save one old nymph, hight Panopè, to keep it clean.

Thither he brought the sorry Florimel,  
And entertainéd her the best he might,  
(And Panopè her entertained eke well),  
As an immortal might a mortal wight,  
To win his liking unto her delight:  
With flattering words he sweetly wooéd her,  
And offeréd fair gifts t' allure her sight;  
But she both offers and the offerer  
Despised, and all the fawning of the flatterer.

Daily he tempted her with this or that,  
And never suffered her to be at rest:  
But evermore she him refuséd flat,  
And all his feignéd kindness did detest;  
So firmly she had sealéd up her breast.  
Sometimes he boasted that a god he hight;\*  
But she a mortal creature lovéd best:  
Then he would make himself a mortal wight;  
But then she said she loved none but a Fairy Knight.

Then like a Fairy Knight himself he dressed;  
For every shape on him he could endue:  
Then like a king he was to her expressed,  
And offered kingdoms unto her in view  
To be his Leman and his Lady true:  
But, when all this he nothing saw prevail,  
With harder means he cast her to subdue,  
And with sharp threats her often did assail;  
So thinking for to make her stubborn courage quail.

To dreadful shapes he did himself transform:  
Now like a giant; now like to a fiend;  
Then like a centaur; then like to a storm  
Raging within the waves: thereby he weened

---

\* *Hight*, was called.

Her will to win unto his wishéd end :  
But when with fear, nor favour, nor with all  
He else could do, he saw himself esteemed,  
Down in a dungeon deep he let her fall,  
And threatened there to make her his eternal thrall.

Again we must leave the poor sufferer to her fate, and inquire after other parties.

Sir Satyrane and the Squire of Dames, after being delivered from the power of the Giantess, travelling together, meet another Knight. He bears upon his shield a *burning heart*. His name is PARIDEL. They find on inquiry that Paridel was another of the many Knights who, on the disappearance of Florimel from the Court of Fairy Land, were sent out in quest of her. They resolve to make their future search in company. Britomart also soon after joins them. Towards night, they reach the abode or Castle of an inhospitable churl, named Malbecco. Malbecco was old, ill-favoured, and ill-tempered. His wife Hellenore was young, beautiful, and wanton. Paridel, the new companion of Sir Satyrane, was of the same class as the Squire of Dames, only more profligate and unprincipled. Educated, courtly in manners, well-dressed, bland and oily in conversation, combining entire warmth of manner with entire coldness of heart, this gentlemanly villain could rob a household of its ornament with the same grace with which he would pluck a rose from a flower-garden; and afterwards, abandon his victim to her fate with precisely the same indifference with which he would throw away that rose, after an hour's handling, as an idle and offensive weed. The account of Hellenore's elopement with Paridel, his subsequent desertion of

her, her final abandonment and life of crime, the grief and ruin of her husband (who with all his faults and his disagreeable qualities, really loved her), occupy the whole of the ninth and tenth Cantos. The history, though instructive, is not inviting. It is a mere picture of sorrow and shame, without containing any one object on whom to bestow our pity. There is indeed a kind of sorrow which gives pleasure. But it is when we weep with others, not when we weep for them.

The eleventh and twelfth Cantos are occupied with an exploit of the Virgin-Knight Britomart. The adventure relates to the deliverance of our friend Amoret, whose character as contrasted with that of her twin-sister Belphebe, was sketched a few pages back. Amoret loved a gentle Knight, Scudamour. Scudamour returned her love with equal measure. But the course of true love never did run smooth. On the evening of their nuptials, a vile enchanter, Busyrane, found means during the gay festivities, in some secret manner, to spirit away the bride. Imagine the consternation of the bridal party when, all of a sudden, the bride herself is not to be found. Imagine the state of mind of Sir Scudamour, who was, in all honourable feelings, the exact counterpart of Amoret. Hours, days, weeks, months of agony pass by, and nothing can be learned of this cruel mystery. At last it is discovered that she is closely confined in a castle by a grim enchanter. The agony of Scudamour is now only doubled by the knowledge that it is beyond his power to release her.

Britomart, travelling through the country, finds him stretched upon the ground, a perfect picture of despair.



She arouses him from his stupor of grief, and on inquiring more fully into the cause, determines at once to attempt the rescue of Amoret. They find the Castle of Busyrane. At its entrance, behold, not a gate, but a new mode of preventing access.

There they dismounting drew their weapons bold,  
And stoutly came unto the Castle gate,  
Whereas no gate they found them to withhold,  
Nor ward to wait at morn and evening late;  
But in the porch, that did them sore amate,\*  
A flaming fire ymixed with smouldery smoke  
And stinking sulphur, that with grisly hate  
And dreadful horror did all entrance choke,  
Enforcéd them their forward footing to revoke.

Britomart, for the first time in her life, shrunk back. Here was indeed a new species of danger. She, however, on trial found she could pass through those flames unhurt. Scudamour, attempting the same, was cruelly burnt and kept outside. There he must remain in anxious expectancy, while Britomart enters alone that fearful and mysterious place. After passing the fiery threshold, no farther interruption to her progress is offered. She wanders from room to room, and from hall to hall, through the enchanted chambers. These apartments are of curious workmanship and richly furnished, but entirely empty. For hours, Britomart wanders through them, but cannot find the least sign of human life or of living being. If anything can appal a stout heart, it is loneliness and silence in such a place. Will Britomart quail?

The warlike Maid, beholding earnestly  
The goodly ordinance of this rich place,

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\* *Amate*, daunt.



Did greatly wonder ; ne could satisfy  
Her greedy eyes with gazing a long space :  
But more she marvelled that no footing's trace  
Nor wight appeared, but wasteful emptiness  
And solemn silence over all that place :  
Strange thing it seemed, that none was to possess  
So rich purveyance, ne them keep with carefulness.

And, as she looked about, she did behold  
How over that same door was likewise writ,  
*Be bold, Be bold*, and everywhere, *Be bold* ;  
That much she mused, yet could not construe it  
By any riddling skill or common wit.  
At last she spied, at that room's upper end,  
Another iron door, on which was writ,  
*Be not too bold* ; whereto though she did bend  
Her earnest mind, yet wist not what it might intend.

Thus she there waited until eventide,  
Yet living creature none she saw appear.  
And now sad shadows gan the world to hide  
From mortal view, and wrap in darkness drear ;  
Yet n'ould she doff her weary arms, for fear  
Of secret danger, ne let sleep oppress  
Her heavy eyes with nature's burden dear,  
But drew herself aside in sickness,\*  
And her well-pointed weapons did about her dress.

Then, whenas cheerless Night ycovered had  
Fair heaven with an universal cloud,  
That every wight dismayed with darkness sad  
In silence and in sleep themselves did shroud,  
She heard a shrilling trumpet sound aloud,  
Sign of nigh battle, or got victory :  
Nought therewith daunted was her courage proud,  
But rather stirred to cruel enmity,  
Expecting ever when some foe she might descry.

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\* *Sickness, safety.*

With that, an hideous storm of wind arose,  
 With dreadful thunder and lightning atwixt,  
 And an earthquake, as if it straight would loose  
 The world's foundation from his centre fixed :  
 A direful stench of smoke and sulphur mixed  
 Ensued, whose noyance filled the fearful stead  
 From the fourth hour of night unto the sixt ;  
 Yet the bold Britoness was nought ydread,  
 Though much enmovéd, but steadfast perseveréd.

All suddenly a stormy whirlwind blew  
 Throughout the house, that clappéd every door,  
 With which that iron wicket open flew,  
 As it with mighty levers had been tore ;  
 And forth issued, as on the ready floor  
 Of some theatre, a grave personage,  
 That in his hand a branch of laurel bore,  
 With comely haviour and countenance sage,  
 Yclad in costly garments fit for tragic stage.

The personage who thus appears, ushers in a Masque, which Britomart contemplates in secret. The maskers are Fancy, Desire, Doubt, Danger, Fear, Hope, Dissemblance, Suspicion, Grief, Fury, &c. It was called the MASQUE OF CUPID. It was a pageant, raised by the Enchanter to beguile if possible the heart of Amoret, and make her cease to pine for Scudamour. The reader knows by this time Spenser's power in such scenes as these. Each of the gay maskers is described separately. Here is one.

The first was FANCY, like a lovely boy  
 Of rare aspéct and beauty without peer,  
 Matchable either to that imp of Troy,  
 Whom Jove did love and choose his cup to bear ;  
 Or that same dainty lad, which was so dear  
 To great Alcides, that, whenas he died,  
 He wailéd womanlike with mány a tear,

And every wood and every valley wide  
He filled with Hylas' name; the nymphs eke Hylas cried.

His garment neither was of silk nor say,  
But painted plumes in goodly order dight,  
Like as the sunburnt Indians do array  
Their tawny bodies in their proudest plight:  
As those same plumes, so seemed he vain and light,  
That by his gait might easily appear;  
For still he fared as dancing in delight,  
And in his hand a windy fan did bear,  
That in the idle air he moved still here and there.

Presently we shall see Amoret herself come forth at the Enchanter's bidding. The mode by which he sought to turn away her love from Scudamour, was to present her, on the one hand, with pictures of all sorts of pleasure which might be at her command; and, on the other hand, to subject her to excruciating pain, from which she might at any time be released, by merely consenting to transfer her affections from Scudamour. There are important truths, which are to be drawn from the heart, not from the head. The man who has not himself loved, knows nothing of love's true nature. The Enchanter, with all his superhuman subtlety of intellect, knew not, that woman's love springs not from the prospect of pleasure, still less doth it shrink back at the prospect of pain. It is not even a barter of love for love. Amoret loved Scudamour, not because he loved her, but *because he was lovely in her eyes*. He had those qualities which attracted her admiration. He filled and satisfied her sense of the true, the noble, the beautiful, the good. He was her beau-ideal of a man.

But it is time that we see the captive in the Enchanted Chamber.

After all these there marched a most fair Dame,  
Led of two greasy Villains, th' one Despight,  
The other clepéd Cruelty by name :  
She, doleful Lady, like a dreary sprite  
Called by strong charms out of eternal night,  
Had Death's own image figured in her face,  
Full of sad signs, fearful to living sight ;  
Yet in that horror shewed a seemly grace,  
And with her feeble feet did move a comely pace.

Her breast all naked, as net ivory  
Without adorn of gold or silver bright  
Wherewith the craftsman wonts it beautify,  
Of her due honour was despoiléd quite ;  
And a wide wound therein (O rueful sight !)  
Entrenchéd deep with knife accurséd keen,  
Yet freshly bleeding forth her fainting sprite,  
(The work of cruel hand) was to be seen,  
That dyed in sanguine red her skin all snowy clean :

At that wide orifice her trembling heart  
Was drawn forth, and in silver basin laid,  
Quite through transfixéd with a deadly dart,  
And in her blood yet steaming fresh embayed.  
And those two Villains (which her steps upstayed,  
When her weak feet could scarcely her sustain,  
And fading vital powers gan to fade,)  
Her forward still with torture did constrain,  
And evermore increaséd her consuming pain.

The Maskers and Amoret at length disappear, as they had entered, and the iron door is swung to and locked by some unseen hand, before Britomart can issue from her place of concealment. She lies concealed, therefore, all night and all next day, resolving to bide her time. The following night, she secures an entrance into the inner chamber, and at last boldly confronts the Enchanter and his victim. The scene



which follows is one of that awful kind in which Spenser delights.

And, her before, the vile Enchanter sat,  
Figuring strange charácters of his art;  
With living blood he those charácters wrat,\*  
Dreadfully dropping from her dying heart,  
Seeming transfixéd with a cruel dart;  
And all perforce to make her him to love.  
Ah! who can love the worker of her smart!  
A thousand charms he formerly did prove;  
Yet thousand charms could not her steadfast heart remove.

Soon as that Virgin Knight he saw in place,  
His wicked books in haste he overthrew,  
Not caring his long labours to deface;  
And, fiercely running to that Lady true,  
A murderous knife out of his pocket drew,  
The which he thought for villanous despite,  
In her tormented body to imbrue:  
But the stout Damsel, to him leaping light,  
His curséd hand withheld, and masteréd his might.

From her to whom his fury first he meant,  
The wicked weapon rashly he did wrest,  
And, turning to herself his fell intent,  
Unwares it struck into her snowy chest,  
That little drops empurpled her fair breast.  
Exceeding wroth therewith the Virgin grew,  
Albe the wound were nothing deep impressed,  
And fiercely forth her mortal blade she drew,  
To give him the reward for such vile outrage due.

So mightily she smote him, that to ground  
He fell half dead; next stroke him should have slain,  
Had not the Lady, which by him stood bound,  
Dernly unto her calléd to abstain  
From doing him to die; for else her pain

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\* *Wrat*, wrote.



Should be remediless: since none but he  
Which wrought it, could the same recure again.  
Therewith she stayed her hand, loth stayed to be;  
For life she him envied, and longed revenge to see:

And to him said: "Thou wicked man, whose meed  
For so huge mischief and vile villany  
Is death, or if that ought do death exceed;  
Be sure that nought may save thee from to die,  
But if that thou this Dame do presently  
Restore unto her health and former state;  
This do, and live; else die undoubtedly."  
He, glad of life, that looked for death but late,  
Did yield himself right willing to prolong his date:

And rising up gan straight to overlook  
Those curséd leaves, his charms back to reverse:  
Full dreadful things out of that baleful book  
He read, and measured many a sad verse,  
That horror gan the Virgin's heart to perse  
And her fair locks up staréd stiff on end,  
Hearing him those same bloody lines rehearse;  
And, all the while he read, she did extend  
Her sword high over him, if ought he did offend.

Anon she gan perceive the house to quake,  
And all the doors to rattle round about;  
Yet all that did not her dismayéd make,  
Nor slack her threatful hand for danger's doubt,  
But still with steadfast eye and courage stout  
Abode, to weet what end would come of all:  
At last that mighty chain, which round about  
Her tender waist was wound, adown gan fall,  
And that great brazen pillar broke in pieces small.

The cruel steel, which thrilled her dying heart,  
Fell softly forth, as of his own accord;  
And the wide wound, which lately did dispart  
Her bleeding breast and riven bowels gored,  
Was closéd up, as it had not been sored;

And every part to safety full sound,  
As she were never hurt, was soon restored :  
Then, when she felt herself to be unbound  
And perfect whole, prostrate she fell unto the ground.

The whole spell, in short, is dissolved, and Amoret is informed of the safety and constancy of Scudamour. That was a moment of rapture which can be appreciated by all who appreciate her noble nature. They hasten to the castle door, where Scudamour was left in waiting, and where a joyful meeting is expected. *Scudamour is not there.* By what means he has been led away, what further barriers are to be interposed between them, will hereafter appear. All that poor Amoret at this time knows, is that heavy heart-ache which too often follows the golden moments of rapture.

## BOOK IV.

### THE LEGEND OF CAMBEL AND TRIAMOND, OR OF FRIENDSHIP.

Spenser's Letter to Raleigh—Review—Difficulties of the Subject—Reason why the Third and Fourth Books are not Periodique—Adventure of Britomart and Amoret resumed—Description of Até—Blandamour wins the Snowy Florimel—Story of Cambel and Triamond—The Tournament—Artegal and Britomart at the Tournament—The Cestus of Venus—The Contest for the Palm of Beauty—Gold Pens—The Girdle awarded to the Snowy Florimel—Scudamour in the House of Care—Fight between Britomart and Artegal—The Disclosure—Amoret carried off by Lust—Attempt of Timias to rescue her—Lust slain by Belphebe—Timias in Doubtful Circumstances—The Rebuke—Amoret again Deserted—Interposition of Prince Arthur—The Hut of Slander—Commentator's Episode—Castle of Corflambo—Britomart rescued by Prince Arthur—Meeting of Amoret and Scudamour—Scudamour's Exploit—The Island and Temple of Venus—Character of Scudamour—The Story of Florimel resumed—The Story of Marinel—The Great Meeting of Submarine Deities in the Hall of Proteus—Discovery, Rescue, and Espousals of Florimel.

WHEN Spenser, in 1590, published the first three Books of the Fairy Queen, he appended to them a letter explanatory of the plan of the poem. This letter has become especially important, inasmuch as the poem was never completed. I quoted a part of this letter in a former Book. From the knowledge of the poem which the reader has already obtained,

he will be prepared to read with intelligence and interest the further extracts which are now to be given.

“The end of all the Book is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline : which for that I conceived should be most plausible and pleasing, being coloured with an historical fiction, the most part of men delight to read, rather for variety of matter than for the profit of the ensample, I chose the history of King Arthur, as most fit for the excellency of his person, being made famous by many men’s former works, and also farthest from the danger of envy and suspicion of the present time. . . . I labour to portray in Arthur, before he was king, the image of a brave Knight, perfected in the twelve private MORAL VIRTUES, as Aristotle hath devised ; the which is the purpose of these first twelve Books ; which if I find to be well accepted, I may be perhaps encouraged to frame the other part of POLITIC VIRTUES in his person, after that he came to be King. To some I know this method will seem displeasing, which had rather have good discipline delivered plainly in way of precepts, or sermoned at large, as they use, than thus cloudily enwrapped in allegorical devices. But such, meseems, should be satisfied with the use of these days, seeing all things accounted by their shows, and nothing esteemed of that is not delightful and pleasing to common sense. For this cause is Xenophon preferred before Plato, for that the one, in the exquisite depth of his judgment, formed a commonwealth such as it should be ; but the other, in the person of Cyrus and the Persians,

fashioned a government such as might best be ; so much more profitable and gracious is doctrine by ensample than by rule. So have I laboured to do in the person of Arthur, whom I conceive, after his long education by Timon, (to whom he was by Merlin delivered to be brought up,) to have seen in a dream or vision the Fairy Queen, with whose excellent beauty ravished, he awaking resolved to seek her out ; and so being by Merlin armed, and by Timon thoroughly instructed, he went to seek her forth in Fairy Land. In the Fairy Queen, I mean GLORY in my general intention ; but in my particular, I conceive the most excellent and glorious person of our sovereign, THE QUEEN. . . . . And yet in some places else, I do otherwise shadow her. For considering she beareth two persons, the one of a most royal Queen, . . . . the other of a most virtuous and beautiful lady, this latter part in some places I do express in Belphebe. . . . . So in the person of Prince Arthur, I set forth MAGNIFICENCE in particular ; which virtue, for that . . it is the perfection of all the rest, and containeth in it them all, therefore in the whole course I mention the deeds of Arthur applicable to that Virtue which I write of in that Book. But of the twelve other Virtues, I make twelve other Knights the patrons, for the more variety of the history. . . . . The beginning, therefore, of my history, if it were to be told by an historiographer, should be the twelfth Book, which is the last ; where I devise that the Fairy Queen kept her annual feast twelve days, upon which several days the occasion of the twelve several Adventures happened."



We have no means of knowing certainly what were the twelve moral, much less, the twelve political virtues which Spenser had in his mind in sketching this bold outline. Of the six beautiful and generous conceptions with which he has enriched the great stores of human thought, we have already examined three. The first Book of the Fairy Queen has been found to treat of Holiness, that is, of human excellence in relation to matters of faith and religion. The second Book treats of Temperance, or of moderation in regard to the whole of man's action and being, moral, mental, and physical. The third Book treats of Chastity, or universal purity of thought, motive, affection, and condition, with illustrations of this high virtue in a great variety of affiliated and yet distinct characters, male and female, bad and good.

The subject has not been without its difficulties. To analyze with discretion the workings of the human heart in these great departments of moral action; to catch the spirit and meaning of the concrete and poetical symbols of the author; to extract from the flower of poesy, and present in marketable form, the honey which it contains; to present to the imagination such pictures as should tend to cultivate and elevate the taste and enkindle in the heart a love for the good, the beautiful, and the true; to give so much of the story as to make the characters and pictures intelligible to all classes of readers, without taking from the poem the zest of novelty to those who may have the leisure and the inclination to read it for themselves, and without wearying those who have read it already; to penetrate the instructive mysteries of Belphebe and Amoret, and Britomart, and Florimel; this,

let it be said, has required something beyond mere verbal criticism, or historical and grammatical illustration. It has been necessary rather to abstract the mind from the piles of erudition with which the subject is loaded, and to read the poem, as the Christian should read his Bible, with a perpetual appeal to the silent expositor within. It has been necessary to turn the thoughts continually inward, and to draw from the very penetralia of consciousness that which was intended to sink equally deep. If the instruction thus intended has not entirely missed its aim, if any hitherto undeveloped germ of thought or taste has been quickened into life, if any spring of emotion has been set free, if any subtle chord heretofore quiescent has been touched and caused to vibrate, if (to resume a former figure) the genius of Spenser has been so conducted as to excite in any good degree the dormant electricity of others, the labour bestowed upon the attempt has not been entirely in vain.

One more brief explanation seems to be necessary before entering upon the subject of the Fourth Book. If the reader will recur to his recollections, he will understand what is meant, when it is said, that the first and second Books of the Fairy Queen are comparatively *periodique*. Each of these Books contains in itself a complete period—a story that is brought to a conclusion. The same will be found to be true to some extent of the fifth and sixth Books. The third and fourth, on the contrary, are intimately blended together. New characters indeed are introduced into the fourth Book. But all the leading characters of the third are continued, and that, not incidentally, but as exercising a pervading influence. The author

seldom stops to explain the motives of his procedure. Perhaps, however, the ingenious reader may find in the peculiarity of the third and fourth Books, which has been mentioned, something better than an occasion for flippant censure. The peculiarity mentioned, would seem indeed to spring naturally out of the intimate and necessary connexion of the virtues illustrated in these two Books. The subject of the third Book is the Legend of Britomart, or of Chastity. That of the fourth Book is the Legend of Cambel and Triamond, or of Friendship. And, surely, he who is pure and true towards others in all the relations which result from the difference of the sexes, has towards those of the same sex, or towards any, where the consideration of sex cannot arise, all those qualities and principles which lead to friendship. He, on the contrary, who is untrue and recreant in these important relations, the trifler, the rake, the ruffian, the wanton, the slave of guilty passion in any of its multiplied forms, is unfit for the offices, unworthy of the trust, incapable of the privileges of true friendship. We are not, therefore, surprised nor discontent, in reading the beautiful Legend of Cambel and Triamond, at finding many of our old acquaintances mingling in the new scenes. Britomart and Amoret are found as true and confiding to each other, in the relation of friendship, as each of them is to her chosen Knight in the bonds of a holier affection; and, on the other hand, the heartless treason of Paridel and the Squire of Dames towards the gentler sex, is found to result from a principle which is capable of additional illustration from their treachery to each other.

The previous Book, it will be recollected, ends with

the disappearance of Scudamour from the gate of the enchanted castle, just as Britomart succeeds in releasing Amoret and bringing her out. The fourth Book begins precisely where the third leaves off. Britomart and Amoret travel forth together in search of Scudamour.

In this adventure, the first difficulty arose from the supposed sex of Britomart, who still appeared to Amoret as a Knight, being clad in armour and appearing in all respects as a man. It did not then suit the purposes of Britomart to make her real condition known to her fair companion. Hence there was, *as there often is*, a painful struggle between the sense of delicacy and the sentiment of gratitude. The Lady Una, it is true, travelled thus through the country with the Red-Cross Knight. But that was by official appointment, and there was a promised affiance, in case of success, rendering it proper for one party to give and the other to receive protection. Between Amoret and her present conductor, there existed no such relations. There was indeed no acquaintance beyond that of the present day. And yet, to manifest distrust or suspicion, would have the appearance of base ingratitude towards her noble benefactor. Hence the difficulty.

For Amoret right fearful was and faint  
Lest she with blame her honour should attain,  
That every word did tremble as she spake,  
And every look was coy and wondrous quaint,  
And every limb that touchéd her did quake;  
Yet could she not but courteous countenance to her make.

Britomart, however, took a suitable occasion to disclose to her companion her real sex and the cause



of her wandering forth in this strange manner. The two ladies thereupon beguiled the way, discoursing of their loves. In fact, the first night after the disclosure, neither of them, according to the most authentic tradition, slept a wink. How far their experience was singular in this respect, can be judged by some of the readers of this book better than by the Expositor.

[There] *all that night* they of their loves did treat,  
And hard adventures twixt themselves alone,  
That each the other gan with passion great  
And grievful pity privately bemoan.

Travelling thus together, in the enjoyment of the fullest confidence and friendship, they meet a party consisting of two Knights and two Ladies. One Knight, Paridel, and one Lady, Duessa, are old acquaintances. The other Knight, Blandamour (flattering lover, or one who makes love by flattery), is a stranger; but his character is sufficiently indicated by his name and his company. He is of the same genus with his friend Paridel, only with a larger stock of impudence. The other Lady, Até (mischief or discord), is particularly described. As in the case of the other virtues, Spenser illustrates Friendship not only by examples of concord and amity, but by those of hate and discord. Até bears the same relation to friendship, that Atin did to temperance. As Atin exasperated, and stirred up to violence, so Até ever excites discord and ill-will. Her appearance is thus described.

Her face most foul and filthy was to see,  
With squinted eyes contráry ways intended,  
And loathly mouth, unmeet a mouth to be,  
That nought but gall and venom comprehended,



And wicked words that God and man offended :  
 Her lying tongue was in two parts divided,  
 And both the parts did speak, and both contended ;  
 And as her tongue, so was her heart discided,\*  
 That never thought one thing, but doubly still was guided.

Als, as she double spake, so heard she double,  
 With matchless† ears deforméd and distort,  
 Filled with false rumours and seditious trouble,  
 Bred in assemblies of the vulgar sort,  
 That still are led with every light report :  
 And as her ears, so eke her feet were odd,  
 And much unlike ; th' one long, the other short,  
 And both misplaced ; that when th' one forward yode,  
 The other back retiréd and contráry trode.

Likewise unequal were her handés twain ;  
 That one did reach, the other pushed away ;  
 That one did make, the other marred again,  
 And sought to bring all things unto decay ;  
 For all her study was, and all her thought,  
 How she might overthrow the things that Concord wrought.

Those four, Blandamour, Paridel, Duessa, and Até,  
 are the persons met by Britomart and Amoret.

As the parties approach each other, Blandamour tells Paridel, this is a fine opportunity to win a beautiful dame by the overthrow of the stranger Knight. But Paridel recognises that mysterious spear, and has too vivid a recollection of the unceremonious manner in which he had been unhorsed before, to try its virtue a second time. Blandamour, not being equally informed thereupon, determines to win the strange lady himself. But he soon tastes his folly, being unhorsed and dashed to the ground in a way that gives the

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\* *Discided*, cut or slit in two. † *Matchless*, ears that did not match, one being unlike the other.

reader no small satisfaction. Britomart and Amoret then pass on, quitting the party without leave-taking, as they had encountered it without salutation. They take leave also of the reader, as we have now to follow the fortunes of this graceless quartet.

The reader is less disappointed than vexed to find, that Britomart and Amoret had hardly gone out of sight, before the object of their long search makes his appearance. The company, in short, fall in with Scudamour. Scudamour and Paridel tilt, and Paridel is unhorsed. Duessa laughs at them all for contending about their lady-loves, when the affianced bride of any one of them, she says, would prove false on the first occasion. Scudamour listens to such an imputation with profound disdain, but Até tells him, not to be so scornful and so sure; and goes on to relate, that she had lately seen the boasted Amoret and a strange Knight travelling about the country together, and gives such circumstantial proof of their intimacy, as leaves no doubt on the mind of the unhappy Scudamour of the truth of her tale.

During this conversation, another Knight approaches, Sir Ferraugh, accompanied by a lady whom we have heard of before, the Snowy Florimel. Blandamour, whose love for the sex was like that of the modern for his newspaper, *the latest arrival being the only ground of choice*, immediately tilts with Sir Ferraugh for the beautiful Snowy Florimel, and wins her. Great is his rejoicing over his supposed prize. Her exceeding beauty and her winning ways (for the witch had well instructed her to counterfeit the true Florimel) give Blandamour such joy and delight that at length Paridel becomes envious. Até is not wanting, but fans

the flames of discord between the companions, until it breaks out into open quarrel, and Blandamour and Paridel fight for her. The contest is long and severe. It is interrupted, however, by the arrival of the Squire of Dames. This young man informs them of a great feat of arms that is about to be celebrated. The distinguished Knight, Sir Satyrane, it is reported, has found by the sea-shore the girdle of Florimel, who is currently believed to have been devoured by some monster. Paridel sees that this report is unfounded, for there is the beautiful lady herself. Still, he thinks it behoves Blandamour, as a true Knight, to enter the lists with Sir Satyrane, and establish in honourable combat his right to the beauteous prize.

Glad man was he to see that joyous sight,  
For none alive but joyed in Florimel,  
And lowly to her louting thus behight:  
"Fairest of fair, that fairness dost excel,  
This happy day I have to greet you well,  
In which you safe I see, whom thousand late  
Misdoubted lost through mischief that befell;  
Long may you live in health and happy state!"  
She little answered him, but lightly did aggrate.

Then, turning to those Knights, he gan anew:  
"And you, Sir Blandamour, and Paridel,  
That for this Lady present in your view  
Have raised this cruel war and outrage fell,  
Certes, meseems, be not adviséd well;  
But rather ought in friendship for her sake  
To join your force, their forces to repel  
That seek perforce her from you both to take,  
And of your gotten spoil their own triúmph to make."

Thereat Sir Blandamour, with countenance stern  
All full of wrath, thus fiercely him bespake:

"Arcad, thou Squire, that I the man may learn,  
That dare from me think Florimel to take!"

"Not one," quoth he, "but many do partake  
Herein; as thus: It lately so befell,  
That Satyrane a Girdle did uptake  
Well known to appertain to Florimel,  
Which for her sake he wore, as him beseeméd well.

"But, whenas she herself was lost and gone,  
Full many Knights, that lovéd her like dear,  
Thereat did greatly grudge, that he alone  
That lost fair Lady's ornament should wear,  
And gan therefore close spite to him to bear;  
Which he to shun, and stop vile envy's sting,  
Hath lately caused to be proclaimed each where  
A solemn feast, with public tourneying,  
To which all Knights with them their Ladies are to bring:

"And of them all she, that is fairest found,  
Shall have that golden Girdle for reward;  
And of those Knights, who is most stout on ground,  
Shall to that fairest Lady be preferred.  
Since therefore she herself is now your ward,  
To you that ornament of hers pertains,  
Against all those that challenge it, to guard,  
And save her honour with your venturous pains;  
That shall you win more glory than ye here find gains."

The whole company thereupon resolve to repair to  
the place appointed for this grand tournament, and to  
stand by each other in firm alliance in this and all  
other contests.

So, well accorded, forth they rode together  
In friendly sort, that lasted but a while;  
And of all old dislikes they made fair weather:  
Yet all was forged and spread with golden foil,  
That under it hid hate and hollow guile.  
Ne, certes, can that friendship long endure,  
However gay and goodly be the style,



That doth ill cause or evil end enure :  
 For virtue is the band that bindeth hearts most sure.

These parties, viz., Blandamour, Paridel, and the Squire of Dames, Até, Duessa, and Snowy Florimel, with their attendants, while travelling thus together, sometimes in closest amity, and again fiercely discordant, see in the distance two Knights and two Ladies of a very different character. These were no other than Cambel and Triamond, the heroes of the Book, with their lady-loves, Cambina and Canace.

More than a Canto and a half are occupied with the description of these persons, and the origin of the romantic friendship that existed between them. The story is taken in part from Chaucer, by whom it was begun, but not finished. Spenser commences the legend with a tribute of affectionate reverence to Chaucer, whom he terms, in that oft-quoted phrase,

*“ The well of English undefiled,  
 On Fame’s eternal bead-roll worthy to be filed.”*

I am obliged reluctantly to omit the whole of this beautiful legend. It can be omitted the more safely, as it is of the nature of an episode, not being necessary to the connexion of the story, though it is necessary to a proper appreciation of the heroes, Cambel and Triamond. The reader will have, therefore, to imagine them two most accomplished and redoubted Knights, bound together by an affection which, had either of them been of the opposite sex, would have been love ; but which, as between two of the same sex—two men or two women—is friendship ; an affection, founded simply upon the admiration of noble qualities which each sees in the other, and the attachment which the

heart always makes to the objects of its admiration. *The heart that has any goodness of its own, necessarily cleaves to goodness seen in others.* Not to do so, is as unnatural and impossible as for the birds to resist the genial influences of spring.

Cambina, the sister of Triamond, was Lady-love to Cambel: Canace, sister of Cambel, was Lady-love to Triamond; and the Ladies were bound to each other by a golden chain of friendship, as pure, as bright, as strong, as that which bound together their martial lords.

These four, thus closely linked in the ties of love and amity, are overtaken on the road by the six before described, Blandamour, Paridel, and the Squire of Dames, Duessa, Até, and Snowy Florimel. Blandamour, under the instigations of Até, is disposed to pick a quarrel with the strangers.

But fair Cambina, with persuasions mild,  
Did mitigate the fierceness of their mode,  
That for the present they were reconciled,  
And gan to treat of deeds of arms abroad,  
And strange adventures, all the way they rode:  
Among the which they told, as then befell,  
Of that great TOURNEY which was blazed abroad,  
For that rich Girdle of fair Florimel,

The price of her which did in beauty most excel.

From every part of the country, as we travel along, we find detached parties going up to attend this grand TOURNAMENT. The object of this noted feat of arms has been already explained. Sir Satyrane, of all the Knights that had gone out in search of Florimel, was the only one who had discovered any trace of her. He had found her Girdle upon the sea-shore under

circumstances which led universally to the belief that she had been devoured by a monster. This Girdle he kept as a precious relic, both for its sumptuous materials and rare workmanship, and for its reminiscences of the beautiful and romantic woman to whom it had belonged. The fortune of Sir Satyrane, in becoming possessed of this precious and beautiful memorial, made him the object of envy—a circumstance not uncommon in the history of any man, who happens to possess the evidences of regard from the other sex. Sir Satyrane determined not to owe to fortune, what he felt himself able to win by valour. He proposed therefore to hold a grand tournament, in which he would maintain his right to the Girdle against all comers. It was to this great gathering of chivalry, that the different parties of Knights and Ladies whom we have met, and many others whose description I have omitted, were all tending.

At length, upon the appointed day,  
Unto the place of TOURNAMENT they came;  
Where they before them found in fresh array  
Many a brave Knight and many a dainty Dame,  
Assembled for to get the honour of that game,

Then first of all forth came Sir Satyrane,  
Bearing that precious relic in an ark  
Of gold, that bad eyes might it not profane;  
Which drawing softly forth out of the dark,  
He open showed, that all men it might mark;  
A gorgeous Girdle, curiously embossed  
With pearl and precious stone, worth many a mark;  
Yet did the workmanship far pass the cost:  
It was the same which lately Florimel had lost.

The same aloft he hung in open view,  
To be the prize of beauty and of might;

The which, eftsoons discovered, to it drew  
 The eyes of all, allured with close delight,  
 And hearts quite robbéd with so glorious sight,  
 That all men threw out vows and wishes vain.  
 Thrice happy Lady, and thrice happy Knight,  
 Them seemed that could so goodly riches gain,  
 So worthy of the peril, worthy of the pain.

Then took the bold Sir Satyrane in hand  
 An huge great spear, such as he wont to wield,  
 And, vaneing forth from all the other band  
 Of Knights, addressed his maiden-headed shield,  
 Showing himself all ready for the field ;  
 Gainst whom there singled from the other side  
 A Paynim Knight that well in arms was skilled,  
 And had in many a battle oft been tried,  
 Hight Bruncheval the Bold, who fiercely forth did ride.

This famous Tournament occupies one whole Canto, replete with action and brilliant description. Spenser possesses a remarkable power of diversifying these contests. I cannot pretend to follow the narrative of the tournament, which lasted for three days. A bare outline of the action will be given, merely to make the general story intelligible.

The first day, after much hard fighting, in which many Knights were engaged, Sir Satyrane was pronounced victor, and his most difficult opponent, Triamond, was taken off the field wounded.

The second day, Sir Satyrane again took the field against all comers. But in all that press of Knights was nowhere to be seen that redoubted champion, Triamond.

Unable he new battle to darrain,  
 Through grievance of his late receivéd wound.

Cambel resolved to maintain the reputation of his



wounded friend. Keeping secret his friend's case, and keeping from his friend his own intentions, he secretly procured the armour of Triamond, and dressing himself therein, presented himself for battle, to all appearance Triamond himself. His plan was, if he succeeded, to keep his own secret, and let the honour of the exploit redound to his friend; if he failed, by opening his visor, bring the disgrace upon himself.

Which Cambel seeing, though he could not salve,  
Ne done undoe, yet, for to salve his name  
And purchase honour in his friend's behalf,  
This goodly counterfeisance he did frame:  
The shield and arms, well known to be the same  
Which Triamond had worn, unwares to wight  
And to his friend unwist, for doubt of blame  
If he misdid, he on himself did dight,  
That none could him discern; and so went forth to fight.

There Satyrane lord of the field he found,  
Triúmphing in great joy and jollity;  
Gainst whom none able was to stand on ground;  
That much he gan his glory to envy,  
And cast t' avenge his friend's indignity:  
A mighty spear eftsoons at him he bent;  
Who, seeing him come on so furiously,  
Met him midway with equal hardiment,  
That forcibly to ground they both together went.

They up again themselves gan lightly rear,  
And to their triéd swords themselves betake;  
With which they wrought such wondrous marvels there,  
That all the rest it did amazéd make,  
Ne any dared their peril to partake;  
Now cuffing close, now chasing to and fro,  
Now hurtling round advantage for to take:  
As two wild boars together grappling go,  
Chafing and foaming choler each against his foe.

After a good deal of skilful tourneying, Sir Satyrane is unhorsed. Cambel dismounts to seize and bear off the arms of the fallen foe. But before he can succeed in this attempt, he is surrounded by a host of Knights, the adherents of Sir Satyrane, and taken captive. Triamond, in his tent, hearing of the capture of his friend, forgets his own wounds, and rises from his couch, resolving to make a rescue. But on looking, behold his armour is nowhere to be found! Then is the friendly and disinterested plot of Cambel first made known to him. Resolving not to be behindhand in generosity, and totally unmindful of his wounds, he dights himself in the armour of Cambel and rushes into the arena.

Into the thickest of that knightly press  
He thrust and smote down all that was between,  
Carried with fervent zeal; ne did he cease,  
Till that he came where he had Cambel seen  
Like captive thrall two other Knights atween :  
There he amongst them cruel havoc makes,  
That they, which lead him, soon enforcéd been  
To let him loose to save their proper stakes ;  
Who, being freed, from one a weapon fiercely takes :

With that he drives at them with dreadful might,  
Both in remembrance of his friend's late harm,  
And in revengement of his own despite :  
So both together give a new alarm,  
As if but now the battle waxéd warm.  
As when two greedy wolves do break by force  
Into an herd, far from the husband farm,  
They spoil and ravin without all remorse :  
So did these two through all the field their foes enforce.

Fiercely they followed on their bold emprise,  
Till trumpet's sound did warn them all to rest :

Then all with one consent did yield the prize  
To Triamond and Cambel as the best:  
But Triamond to Cambel it released,  
And Cambel it to Triamond transferred;  
Each labouring t' advance the other's gest,  
And make his praise before his own preferred:  
So that the doom was to another day deferred.

The last day came; when all those Knights again  
Assembled were their deeds of arms to shew.  
Full many deeds that day were shewed plain:  
But Satyrane, bove all the other crew,  
His wondrous worth declared in all men's view;  
For from the first he to the last endured:  
And though some while Fortune from him withdrew,  
Yet evermore his honour he recured,  
And with unwearied power his party still assured.

Ne was there Knight that ever thought of arms,  
But that his utmost prowess there made known:  
That by their many wounds and careless harms,  
By shivered spears and swords all understrown,  
By scattered shields, was easy to be shown.  
There might ye see loose steeds at random run,  
Whose luckless riders late were overthrown;  
And Squires make haste to help their Lords fordone:  
But still the Knights of Maidenhead the better won.

At last, just before the close of the third day, when Sir Satyrane and the Knights of his party were beginning to congratulate themselves upon their success, a strange Knight appears—whence, no one can tell. This Knight is clad in uncouth armour, and by his whole appearance creates a great sensation. His disguise is so complete as to prevent his being recognised, although it is evident from his carriage that he is a Knight of distinguished name. The reader is let into the secret as to his real name and character. It is

Artegal, the hero of the fifth Book. This is his first appearance, although he has been for some time known to the reader, as the one for whom Britomart was secretly pining, and of whom she was in search. Britomart, indeed, had seen him (or his spirit) once in the magic mirror of her father. Though thus made known to the reader, and having a name well known in all parts of Fairy Land, he is not recognised by the spectators, but is simply called the *Savage Knight*.

Till that there entered on the other side  
 A stranger knight, from whence no man could read,  
 In quaint disguise, full hard to be described :  
 For all his armour was like savage weed  
 With woody moss bedight, and all his steed  
 With oaken leaves attrapped, that seeméd fit  
 For savage wight, and thereto well agreed  
 His word,\* which on his ragged shield was writ,  
*Salvagesse sans finessé*,† showing secret wit.

He, at his first incoming, charged his spear  
 At him that first appeared in his sight ;  
 That was to weet the stout Sir Sangliere,  
 Who well was known to be a valiant Knight,  
 Approved oft in many a perilous fight :  
 Him at the first encounter down he smote,  
 And over-bore beyond his crouper quite ;  
 And after him another Knight, that hote‡  
 Sir Brianor, so sore that none him life behote.§

Then, ere his hand he reared, he overthrew  
 Seven Knights one after other as they came :  
 And, when his spear was burst, his sword he drew,  
 The instrument of wrath, and with the same  
 Fared like a lion in his bloody game,

---

\* *His word*, the motto on his shield. † *Salvagesse sans finessé*, wildness without art. ‡ *Hote*, hight, was called. § *Behote*, assured.



Hewing and slashing shields and helmets bright,  
And beating down whatever nigh him came,  
That every one gan shun his dreadful sight  
No less than death itself, in dangerous affright.

Thus was Sir Satyrane with all his band,  
By his sole manhood and achievement stout  
Dismayed, that none of them in field durst stand,  
But beaten were and chaséd all about.

*But the day is not yet closed.* Behold still a new Knight, who, entering the field, unhorses first the victorious Artegal, then Cambel, then Triamond, then Blandamour.

Full many others at him likewise ran ;  
But all of them likewise dismounted were :  
Ne certes wonder ;—for no power of man  
Could bide the force of *that enchanted spear!*

We have seen this spear before. It is, it can be, no other than that of Britomart, the Knight of the Heben Spear,—who wins the day, and is accordingly declared victor.

But this famous tournament has a counterpart quite as exciting and beautiful, as that which we have already seen.

THE CESTUS OF VENUS among the ancients was the emblem of whatever in woman constitutes personal charms,—the countless graces, namely, of voice, gesture, attitude, person, face, and manner. Spenser, who never introduces the classical mythology but to improve it, and who has no admiration for brilliant qualities apart from moral purity, gives to this beautiful myth a higher and nobler meaning—a meaning worthy of the man that wrote the Epithalamium.

It was a part of the terms of the tournament of Sir Satyrane, that after the contest of valour among the Knights, there should be a contest of BEAUTY among the Ladies; that the Lady, who should be adjudged most beautiful, should be entitled to the Girdle of Florimel; and that, lastly, both Lady and Girdle should be awarded to the Knight who had by his valour won the meed of arms. The Knight of the Heben Spear had won the victory of arms, and was therefore entitled to the Girdle, and to the Lady who by superior beauty should win it. The competitors for the prize of beauty, therefore, are now to be unveiled in the presence of this gay assemblage.

First Cambel removes the veil from fair Cambina, disclosing a face of such heavenly purity as to steal away the hearts of all beholders. Next Triamond uncovers the face of the brilliant Canace, whose beauty bright "Did daze the eyes of all with its exceeding light." Paridel next brings forth the hateful Duessa, now appearing indeed like an angel of light, under the influence of whose forged beauty the hearts of men are affected with a strange seductive influence. Ferramont also produces the bright and shining Lucida.

And after these, an hundred Ladies moe  
Appear in place, the which each other do outgo.

To describe the exquisite beauty of all these excellent ladies, the poet says, one would need a PEN OF GOLD, hardly dreaming, I suppose, that in the progress of invention, the day would come, when even the dull prose of an unpretending commentary on his immortal verses, would be written with such an instrument!

All which whoso dare think for to enchase,  
Him needeth sure a GOLDEN PEN I ween,  
To tell the feature of each goodly face,  
For, since the day that they created been,  
So many heavenly faces were not seen  
Assembled in one place: ne he that thought  
For Chian folk to portrait beauty's queen,  
By view of all the fairest to him brought,  
So many fair did see, as here he might have sought.

At last, the most redoubted Britoness  
Her lovely Amoret did open show;  
Whose face discovered, plainly did express  
The heavenly portrait of bright angel's hue.  
Well weened all, which her that time did view,  
That she should surely bear the bell away;  
Till Blandamour, who thought he had the true  
And very Florimel, did her display:  
The sight of whom once seen did all the rest dismay.

For all afore that seeméd fair and bright,  
Now base and contemptible did appear,  
Compared to her that shone as Phoebe's light  
Amongst the lesser stars in evening clear.  
All that her saw with wonder ravished were,  
And weened no mortal creature she should be,  
But some celestial shape that flesh did bear:  
Yet all were glad there Florimel to see;  
Yet thought that Florimel was not so fair as she.

As guileful goldsmith, that by secret skill  
With golden foil doth finely overspread  
Some baser metal, which commend he will  
Unto the vulgar for good gold instead,  
He much more goodly gloss thereon doth shed  
To hide his falsehood, than if it were true:  
So hard this Idol was to be aread,  
That Florimel herself in all men's view  
She seemed to pass: so forged things do fairest shew.

Then was that Golden Belt by doom of all  
 Granted to her, as to the Fairest Dame,  
 Which being brought, about her middle small,  
 They thought to gird, as best it her became ;  
 But by no means they could it thereto frame :  
 For, ever as they fastened it, it loosed  
 And fell away, as feeling secret blame.  
 Full oft about her waist she it enclosed ;  
 And it as oft was from about her waist disclosed :

That all men wondered at the uncouth sight,  
 And each one thought, as to their fancies came ;  
 But she herself did think it done for spite,  
 And touchéd was with secret wrath and shame  
 Therewith, as thing devised her to defame.  
 Then many other ladies likewise tried  
 About their tender loins to knit the same ;  
 But it would not on none of them abide,  
 But when they thought it fast, eftsoons it was untied.

Which when that scornful Squire of Dames did view,  
 He loudly gan to laugh, and thus to jest:  
 " Alas for pity that so fair a crew,  
 As like cannot be seen from east to west,  
 Cannot find one this girdle to invest !  
 Fy on the man that did it first invent,  
 To shame us all with this, *Ungirt unblest!*  
 Let never Lady to his love assent,  
 That hath this day so many so unmanly shent."\*

Thereat all Knights gan laugh, and Ladies lower :  
 Till that at last the gentle Amoret  
 Likewise assayed to prove that Girdle's power ;  
 And, having it about her middle set,  
 Did find it fit withouten breach or let ;  
 Whereat the rest gan greatly to envy :  
 But Florimel exceedingly did fret,  
 And, snatching from her hand half angrily  
 The Belt again, about her body gan it tie :

---

\* *Shent*, shamed.



Yet nathémore would it her body fit;  
 Yet nathéless to her, as her due right,  
 It yielded was by them that judgéd it;  
 And she herself adjudgéd to the Knight  
 That bore the heben spear, as won in fight.  
 But Britomart would not thereto assent,  
 Ne her own Amoret forego so light  
 For that strange Dame, whose beauty's wonderment  
 She less esteemed than th' other's virtuous government.

I need not say how much the classic myth is improved by Spenser's magic wand.

That Girdle gave the virtue of CHASTE LOVE,  
 And WIFEHOOD TRUE, to all that did it bear;  
 But whosoever contrary doth prove,  
 Might not the same about her middle wear  
 But it would loose, or else asunder tear.

The company are puzzled of course at the strange conduct of the Girdle; but having no suspicion that the Snowy Florimel is not the real lady, they joy greatly at her safe return, adjudge the Girdle to her as the most beautiful, and assign both herself and the Girdle to the Knight of the Heben Spear. *Women's instincts are keen.* Britomart's, especially, seemed not inferior in point to that of her redoubted spear. She wants not the gay lady, notwithstanding her peerless beauty, but taking the virtuous Amoret, continues her journey in quest of the Knights Artegal and Scudamour. Little did they suspect how near they had both been to the object of their wishes. Little did Britomart know that she had unhorsed in the tournament the very man that she was seeking, and that he—but I anticipate.

Scudamour, wretched, restless, wandering abroad

through the country, comes by chance to a hut in the woods, called the House of Care. The description of this abode, and of the night which Scudamour spent in it, seems to me not much inferior to the celebrated Cave of Despair in the first Book. Such passages lose much of their beauty in being detached from their connexion. I will, however, quote a few stanzas.

So as they travelléd, the drooping Night,  
Covered with cloudy storm and bitter shower,  
That dreadful seemed to every living wight,  
Upon them fell, before her timely hour ;  
That forcéd them to seek some covert bower,  
Where they might hide their heads in quiet rest,  
And shroud their persons from that stormy stower.  
Not far away, not meet for any guest,  
They spied a little cottage, like some poor man's nest.

Under a steep hill's side it placéd was,  
There where the mouldered earth had caved the bank ;  
And fast beside, a little brook did pass  
Of muddy water, that like puddle stank,  
By which few crooked fallows grew in rank :  
Whereto approaching nigh, they heard the sound  
Of many iron hammers beating rank,  
And answering their weary turns around,  
That seeméd some blacksmith dwelt in that desert ground.

There entering in, they found the goodman self  
Full busily unto his work ybent ;  
Who was to weet a wretched wearish\* elf,  
With hollow eyes and rawbone cheeks forespent,  
As if he had in prison long been pent :  
Full black and grisly did his face appear,  
Besmeared with smoke that nigh his eyesight blent ;†

---

\* *Wearish*, feeble.

† *Blent*, blinded.

With ruggard beard, and hoary shagged hair,  
The which he never wont to comb, or comely shear.

Rude was his garment, and to rags all rent,  
Ne better had he, ne for better cared :  
With blistered hands amongst the cinders brent,\*  
And fingers filthy, with long nails unpared,  
Right fit to rend the food on which he fared.  
His name was CARE ; a Blacksmith by his trade,  
That neither day nor night from working spared,  
But to small purpose iron wedges made ;  
Those be Unquiet Thoughts that careful minds invade.

In which his work he had six servants pressed,  
About the anvil standing evermore  
With huge great hammers, that did never rest  
From heaping strokes which thereon souséd sore :  
All six strong grooms, but one than other more ;  
For by degrees they all were disagreed ;  
So likewise did the hammers which they bore,  
Like bells, in greatness orderly succeed,  
That he, which was the last, the first did far exceed.

He like a monstrous giant seemed in sight,  
Far passing Bronteus or Pyracmon great,  
The which in Lipari do day and night  
Frame thunderbolts for Jove's avengeful threat.  
So dreadfully he did the anvil beat,  
That seemed to dust he shortly would it drive :  
So huge his hammer, and so fierce his heat,  
That seemed a rock of diamond it could rive  
And rend asunder quite, if he thereto list strive.

Sir Scudamour there entering much admired  
The manner of their work and weary pain ;  
And, having long beheld, at last inquired  
The cause and end thereof ; but all in vain :  
For they for nought would from their work refrain,

---

\* *Brent*, burnt.

Ne let his speeches come unto their ear.  
 And eke the breathful bellows blew amain,  
 Like to the northern wind, that none could hear;  
 Those Pensiveness did move; and Sighs the bellows were.

Which when that Warrior saw, he said no more,  
 But in his armour laid him down to rest:  
 To rest he laid him down upon the floor.

\* \* \* \* \*

There lay Sir Scudamour long while expecting  
 When gentle sleep his weary eyes would close;  
 Oft changing sides, and oft new place electing,  
 Where better seemed he might himself repose;  
 And oft in wrath he thence again uprose;  
 And oft in wrath he laid him down again.  
 But, wheresoe'er he did himself dispose,  
 He by no means could wishéd ease obtain:  
 So every place seemed painful, and each changing vain.

And evermore, when he to sleep did think,  
 'The hammers' sound his senses did molest;  
 And evermore, when he began to wink,  
 The bellows' noise disturbed his quiet rest,  
 Ne suffered sleep to settle in his breast.  
 And all the night the dogs did bark and howl  
 About the house, at scent of stranger guest:  
 And now the crowing cock, and now the owl  
 Loud shrieking, him afflicted to the very soul.

And, if by fortune any little nap  
 Upon his heavy eyelids chanced to fall,  
 Eftsoons one of those villains him did rap  
 Upon his head-piece with his iron mall;  
 That he was soon awakéd therewithal,  
 And lightly started up as one affrayed,\*  
 Or as if one him suddenly did call:  
 So oftentimes he out of sleep abrayed,†  
 And then lay musing long on that him ill apayed.‡

\* *Affrayed*, disturbed.

† *Abrayed*, started.

‡ *Ill apayed*, disturbed.



So long he muséd, and so long he lay,  
That at the last his weary sprite, oppressed  
With fleshly weakness, which no creature may  
Long time resist, gave place to kindly rest,  
That all his senses did full soon arrest:  
Yet, in his soundest sleep, his daily fear  
His idle brain gan busily molest,  
And made him dream those two disloyal were:  
The things, that day most minds, at night do most appear.

With that the wicked Carl, the Master-smith,  
A pair of red-hot iron tongs did take  
Out of the burning cinders, and therewith  
Under his side him nipped; that, forced to wake,  
He felt his heart for very pain to quake,  
And started up avengéd for to be  
On him the which his quiet slumber brake:  
Yet, looking round about him, none could see;  
Yet did the smart remain, though he himself did flee.

In such disquiet and heart-fretting pain,  
He all that night, that too long night, did pass.  
And now the day out of the ocean main  
Began to peep above this earthly mass,  
With pearly dew sprinkling the morning grass:  
Then up he rose like heavy lump of lead,  
That in his face, as in a looking glass,  
The signs of anguish one might plainly read,  
And guess the man to be dismayed with jealous dread.

The House of Care is not obsolete. Alas! the allegory needs no exposition. Happy the man, happy the woman, who has spent only one night in that comfortless abode.

The morning after that wearisome night, Scudamour meets an acquaintance, Sir Artegal. Artegal, it will be recollected, has no knowledge of Britomart, much less of her romantic passion for himself. He is a Knight greatly celebrated in Fairy Land for his

probity and his valour, and is traversing the country in the discharge of a duty assigned him by Gloriana. What this adventure is, will more clearly appear in the following Book, of which he is the hero. His appearance at the tournament of Satyrane was merely incidental. When met by Scudamour, he was still smarting with vexation at his unaccountable defeat. On describing to Scudamour, who was not at the tournament, the arms of the unknown Knight by whom he had been overthrown, Scudamour recognises him at once to be the Knight who is reported as having eloped in so unhandsome a manner with Amoret. Scudamour and Artegal therefore resolve to seek in company, and suitably to punish this strange Knight. They are not long in finding the object of their wishes. That same day, Britomart is seen approaching in the distance. Scudamour, as being the one most deeply injured, claims the honour of beginning the attack. He makes the onset. *Horse and rider roll together in the dust.* Artegal then attacks.

But Artegal, beholding his mischance,  
 New matter added to his former fire ;  
 And, eft\* aventering† his steel-headed lance,  
 Against her rode, full of despiteous ire,  
 That nought but spoil and vengeance did require :  
 But to himself his felonous intent  
 Returning disappointed his desire,  
*Whiles unawares his saddle he forwent*  
*And found himself on ground in great amazement.*

Artegal, though unhorsed, is not stunned, as was Scudamour. On the contrary, his blood is now up,

---

\* *Eft*, eftsoons, quickly.

† *Aventering*, advancing.

and he continues the fight on foot, with all the fierceness of despair.

Lightly he started up out of that stound,  
 And snatching forth his direful deadly blade,  
 Did leap to her, as doth an eager hound  
 Thrust to an hind within some covert glade,  
 Whom without peril he cannot invade:  
 With such fell greediness he her assailed,  
 That though she mounted were, yet he her made  
 To give him ground (so much his force prevailed),  
 And shun his mighty strokes, gainst which no arms availed.

So, as they courséd here and there, it chanced  
 That, in her wheeling round, behind her crest  
 So sorely he her struck, that thence it glanced  
 Adown her back, the which it fairly blest\*  
 From foul mischance; ne did it ever rest,  
 Till on her horse's hinder parts it fell;  
 Where biting deep so deadly it impressed,  
 That quite it chined his back behind the sell,†  
 And to alight on foot her algaates‡ did compel:

Like as the lightning-brand from riven sky,  
 Thrown out by angry Jove in his vengeance,  
 With dreadful force falls on some steeple high;  
 Which battering down, it on the church doth glance,  
 And tears it all with terrible mischance.

Britomart's horse then, is wounded, and she is obliged, *laying aside her enchanted spear*, to dismount and fight on foot, hand to hand.

Yet she, no whit dismayed, her steed forsook;  
 And, *casting from her that enchanted lance*,  
 Unto her sword and shield her soon betook;  
 And therewithal at him right furiously she strook.

*Elest*, preserved.

† *S.U.*, saddle.

‡ *Algaates* (all gates), at all events.

So furiously she strook in her first heat,  
 Whiles with long fight on foot he breathless was,  
 That she him forcéd backward to retreat,  
 And yield unto her weapon way to pass :  
 Whose raging rigour neither steel nor brass  
 Could stay, but to the tender flesh it went,  
 And poured the purple blood forth on the grass ;  
 That all his mail yrived, and plates yrent,  
 Showed all his body bare unto the cruel dent.

At length, whenas he saw her hasty heat  
 Abate, and panting breath begin to fail,  
 He through long sufferance growing now more great,  
 Rose in his strength, and gan her fresh assail,  
 Heaping huge strokes as thick as shower of hail,  
 And lashing dreadfully at every part,  
 As if he thought her soul to disentrail.  
 Ah ! cruel hand, and thrice more cruel heart,  
 That workst such wreck on her to whom thou dearest art !

What iron courage ever could endure  
 To work such outrage on so fair a creature !  
 And in his madness think with hands impure  
 To spoil so goodly workmanship of nature,  
 The Maker's self resembling in her feature !  
 Certes some hellish fury or some fiend  
 This mischief framed, for their first love's defeature,  
 To bathe their hands in blood of dearest friend,  
 Thereby to make their loves' beginning their lives' end.

Thus long they traced and traversed to and fro,  
 Sometimes pursuing and sometimes pursued,  
 Still as advantage they espied thereto :  
 But toward th' end Sir Artegal renewed  
 His strength still more, but she still more decrewed.\*  
 At last his luckless hand he heaved on high,  
 Having his forces all in one accrewed,†  
 And therewith struck at her so hideously,  
 That seeméd nought but death must be her destiny.

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\* *Decrewed*, decreased.

† *Accrewed*, increased.



The wicked stroke upon her helmet chanced,  
And with the force, which in itself it bore,  
Her ventail\* sheared away, and thence forth glanced  
Adown in vain, ne harmed her any more.  
With that, her angel's face, unseen afore,  
Like to the ruddy morn appeared in sight,  
Dewéd with silver drops through sweating sore ;  
But somewhat redder than beseemed aright,  
Through toilsome heat and labour of her weary fight :

And round about the same her yellow hair,  
Having through stirring loosed their wonted band,  
Like to a golden border did appear,  
Framéd in goldsmith's forge with cunning hand :  
Yet goldsmith's cunning could not understand  
To frame such subtle wire, so shiny clear ;  
For it did glisten like the golden sand,  
The which Pactolus with his waters sheer  
Throws forth upon the rivage round about him near.

And as his hand he up again did rear,  
Thinking to work on her his utmost wrack,  
His powerless arm benumbed with secret fear  
From his revengeful purpose shrunk aback,  
And cruel sword out of his fingers slack  
Fell down to ground, as if the steel had sense  
And felt some ruth, or sense his hand did lack,  
Or both of them did think obedience  
To do to so divine a Beauty's excellence.

And he himself, long gazing thereupon,  
At last fell humbly down upon his knee,  
And of his wonder made religion,  
Weening some heavenly goddess he did see,  
Or else unweeting what it else might be ;  
And pardon her besought his error frail,  
That had done outrage in so high degree :  
Whilst trembling horror did his sense assail,  
And made each member quake, and manly heart to quail.

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\* *Ventail*, the front of the helmet, the part which lifts up.

Britomart, however, is for continuing the fight. She tells him to be done with such nonsense, and prepare himself again for battle.

Natheless she, full of wrath for that late stroke,  
All that long while upheld her wrathful hand,  
With fell intent on him to been ywroke;\*  
And, looking stern, still over him did stand,  
Threatening to strike unless he would withstand;  
And bade him rise, or surely he should die.  
But, die or live, for nought he would upstand;  
But her of pardon prayed more earnestly,  
Or wreak on him her will for so great injury.

Which whenas Scudamour, who now abrayed,†  
Beheld, whereas he stood not far aside,  
He was therewith right wondrously dismayed;  
And drawing nigh, whenas he plain descried  
That peerless pattern of dame Nature's pride  
And heavenly image of perfection,  
He blest himself as one sore terrified;  
And, turning fear to faint devotion,  
Did worship her as some celestial vision.

Artegal had by this time raised his visor. *Behold the features which Britomart had seen in the magic mirror.* Her courage instantly droops, her uplifted hand falls by her side. But shall she really yield? Again she rallies her drooping forces, and almost believes herself angry. It is all in vain. Unable any longer to lift her sword against him, she arms her tongue, and thinks to scold. She can get no farther than a very pretty quiescent little pout. Every hard word falters on her tongue; every naughty frown contends with a dimple; even her eagle's glance fast

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\* *Ywroke*, wreaked, avenged. † *Abrayed*, wakened, roused from the stupor caused by his fall.

melts into a loving repose, as she gazes with unchecked look upon the noble countenance, the majestic features, the lion-like face, which for many a long month had formed the staple of her day-dreams, the food of her inmost soul !

Scudamour is of course immediately undeceived on learning the real character of Britomart—but what had become of *Amoret* ?

But Scudamour, whose heart twixt doubtful fear  
And feeble hope hung all this while suspense,  
Desiring of his AMORET to hear  
Some gladful news and sure intelligence,  
Her thus bespake : “ But, Sir, without offence  
Mote I request you tidings of my Love,  
My Amoret, since you her freed from thence  
Where she, captivéd long, great woes did prove ;  
That where ye left I may her seek, as doth behove.”

To whom thus Britomart : “ Certes, Sir Knight,  
What is of her become, or whether reft,  
I cannot unto you aread aright.  
For from that time I from enchanter’s theft  
Her freed, in which ye her all hopeless left,  
I her preserved from peril and from fear,  
And evermore from villany her kept :  
Ne ever was there wight to me more dear  
Than she, ne unto whom I more true love did bear :

“ Till on a day, as through a desert wild  
We travelléd, both weary of the way  
We did alight, and sat in shadow mild ;  
Where fearless I to sleep me down did lay :  
But, whenas I did out of sleep abray,  
I found her not where I her left whylere,  
But thought she wandered was, or gone astray :  
I called her loud, I sought her far and near ;  
But nowhere could her find, nor tidings of her hear.”

When Scudamour those heavy tidings heard,  
His heart was thrilled with point of deadly fear,  
Ne in his face or blood or life appeared ;  
But senseless stood, like to a mazéd steer  
That yet of mortal stroke the stound doth bear.

Thus, then, a short time before the meeting of Artegal and Britomart, she and Amoret had been very strangely and suddenly separated. The adventure which caused this separation, is one not only very striking to the imagination, but if I mistake not, highly discriminative. The proper comprehension of its import may be regarded as a test of the reader's real understanding of the closely affiliated and yet nicely distinct characters of Amoret and Florimel.

One day while they were riding through a forest, Britomart, as just related, fatigued with the journey and with warlike exercises, proposed that they should alight and rest their weary limbs awhile. The result was natural. The warlike Maid soon fell asleep. While Britomart was thus sleeping at noonday in the shady wood, Amoret, not equally fatigued, strolled about for amusement. Suddenly, there was a noise of somebody, or something, rushing out of a thicket behind ; and ere she could turn even to see the cause, it, or he, had seized her, raising her forcibly from the ground, and was carrying her at a rapid rate through the woods. Britomart slept too soundly to hear the shrieks of the surprised Amoret. Hence the catastrophe. *Unguarded beauty, innocent but thoughtless, is in the hands of the monster, Lust.*

The description of this ugly creature is such as to excite equally disgust and alarm. He is a being, human in shape, but a span higher ; with no covering



but a coat of hair, growing like that of the beasts over every part of his body; with enormous teeth, and tushes like those of the wild boar; the nether lip, unlike that of man or beast, hanging down like a pouch, to contain the relics of his present meal for future mastication; his projecting upper lip and nose like the snout of the basest of animals, and dripping with the blood of recent victims; wide, flapping ears, like those of the elephant, hanging down his dirty sides; his only weapon a young oak sapling, covered with sharp knotty snags, hardened, and pointed by being thrust into the fire; and finally, the Savage himself, nurtured from infancy on the milk of wolves and tigers, and living only on the unsodden flesh of beasts and men! *Such is Lust, when viewed through the medium of its consequences*:—superhuman in power, remorseless in havoc, loathsome in aspect. But crime is not always seen through the medium of its consequences. Even Amoret saw not that which carried her so rapidly away. The victims of this terrible passion seldom know at first the true nature of the impulse that hurries them from honour and safety. They forget, that the price of innocence is eternal vigilance. The heart, once remitting its vigil, is often assailed by foes within the camp, and with a degree of force that would not have been supposed to exist. The struggle which ensues between principle and passion, is the penalty for overlooking and neglecting duly to guard against those latent sparks of evil which exist in every human breast. Terrible was the penalty inflicted upon the gentle and virtuous Amoret. The ugly creature seized her in his arms, and bore her at a rapid rate through the wood, the briers and bushes

the while tearing her delicate drapery, and scratching her tender limbs;—and threw her, at last, far from human abode and succour, into his loathsome cave, there to await her fate among other miserable victims.

Spenser does not explain this part of his poem. I am not entirely confident that the explanation suggested, is the true one. Still, it is obvious, that the trial of Amoret, was intended to be different from those of Florimel;—that the raging violence which now threatens its victim, is not from without as in the case of Florimel, but from *within*—a danger springing from a highly susceptible and generous nature, and revealing its full power to herself, for the first time, in a moment of unsuspecting and unguarded confidence.

Dropping speculation, however, let us resume the story.

He stayéd not, but in his arms her bearing  
Ran, till he came to th' end of all his way,  
Unto his cave far from all people's hearing,  
And there he threw her in, nought feeling, ne nought  
fearing.

For she (dear Lady) all the way was dead,  
Whilst he in arms her bore; but, when she felt  
Herself down soused, she wakéd out of dread  
Straight into grief, that her dear heart nigh swelt,  
And eft gan into tender tears to melt.  
Then when she looked about, and nothing found  
But darkness and dread horror where she dwelt,  
She almost fell again into a swound;  
Ne wist whether above she were or under ground.

With that she heard some one close by her side  
Sighing and sobbing sore, as if the pain

Her tender heart in pieces would divide :  
Which she long listening, softly asked again  
What mister wight it was that so did plain ?  
To whom thus answered was : " Ah ! wretched wight,  
That seeks to know another's grief in vain,  
Unweeting of thine own like hapless plight :  
Self to forget to mind another is o'ersight !"

" Ah me !" said she, " where am I, or with whom ?  
Among the living, or among the dead ?  
What shall of me unhappy Maid become ?  
Shall death be th' end, or ought else worse, aread ?"  
" Unhappy Maid," then answered she, " whose dread  
Untried is less than when thou shalt it try :  
Death is to him, that wretched life doth lead,  
Both grace and gain ; but he in hell doth lie,  
That lives a loathéd life, and wishing cannot die.

" This dismal day hath thee a captive made,  
And vassal to the vilest wretch alive ;  
Whose curséd usage and ungodly trade  
The heavens abhor, and into darkness drive :  
For on the spoil of women he doth live.

The miserable woman then goes on to recount her own sufferings in this cave, and her horrible anticipations.

" Now twenty days, by which the sons of men  
Divide their works, have passed through heaven sheen,  
Since I was brought into this doleful den ;  
During which space these sorry eyes have seen  
Seven women by him slain and eaten clean :  
And now no more for him but I alone,  
And this old woman, here remaining been,  
Till thou camest hither to augment our moan ;  
*And of us three to-morrow he will sure eat one."*

" Ah ! dreadful tidings which thou dost declare,"  
Quoth she, " of all that ever hath been known !

Full many great calamities and rare  
 This feeble breast enduréd hath, but none  
 Equal to this, wherever I have gone.  
 But what are you, whom like unlucky lot  
 Hath linked with me in the same chain at one?"  
 "To tell," quoth she, "that which ye see, needs not;  
 A woful wretched maid, of God and man forgot!

"But what I was, it irks me to rehearse:  
 Daughter unto a Lord of high degree;  
 That joyed in happy peace, till Fates perverse  
 With guileful love did secretly agree  
 To overthrow my state and dignity.  
 It was my lot to love a gentle swain,  
 Yet was he but a squire of low degree;  
 Yet was he meet, unless my eye did feign,  
 By any Lady's side for leman to have lain.

"But, for his meanness and disparagement,  
 My sire, who me too dearly well did love,  
 Unto my choice by no means would assent,  
 But often did my folly foul reprove:  
 Yet nothing could my fixéd mind remove,  
 But whether willed or nilléd friend or foe,  
 I me resolved the utmost end to prove;  
 And, rather than my love abandon so,  
 Both sire and friends and all for ever to forego.

"Thenceforth I sought by secret means to work  
 Time to my will, and from his wrathful sight  
 To hide the intent which in my heart did lurk,  
 Till I thereto had all things ready dight.  
 So on a day, unweeting unto wight,  
 I with that Squire agreed away to flit,  
 And in a privy place, betwixt us hight,  
 Within a grove appointed him to meet;  
 To which I boldly came upon my feeble feet.

"But ah! unhappy hour me thither brought:  
 For in that place where I him thought to find,



There was I found, contráry to my thought,  
Of this accurséd Carl of hellish kind,  
The shame of men, and plague of womankind;  
Who trussing me, as eagle doth his prey,  
Me hither brought with him as swift as wind,  
Where yet untouched till this present day,  
I rest his wretched thrall, the sad Æmylia."

Thus of their evils as they did discourse,  
And each did other much bewail and moan;  
Lo! where the Villain's self, their sorrows' source,  
Came to the cave; and rolling thence the stone,  
Which wont to stop the mouth thereof, that none  
Might issue forth, came rudely rushing in,  
And, spreading over all the floor alone,  
Gan dight himself unto his wonted sin;  
Which ended, then his bloody banquet should begin.

Which whenas fearful Amoret perceived,  
She stayed not th' utmost end thereof to try,  
But, like a ghastly gelt whose wits are reaved,  
Ran forth in haste with hideous outcry,  
For horror of his shameful villany:  
But after her full lightly he uprose,  
And her pursued as fast as she did fly:  
Full fast she flies, and far afore him goes,  
Ne feels the thorns and thickets prick her tender toes

Nor hedge, nor ditch, nor hill, nor dale she stays,  
But over-leaps them all, like roebuck light,  
And through the thickest makes her nighest ways;  
And evermore, when with regardful sight  
She looking back espies that grisly wight  
Approaching nigh, she gins to mend her pace,  
And makes her fear a spur to haste her flight;  
More swift than Myrrh' or Daphne in her race,  
Or any of the Thracian Nymphs in savage chase.

The Villain at length recaptures Amoret, but is interrupted on his return by the interposition of one

whom the reader instantly recognises. It is our friend *Timias*.

This young gentleman, whom we left in a very doubtful condition, had now recovered entirely from his bodily wounds. He believed also that his *heart* was whole and sound. The awful brow of the peerless but unapproachable Belphebe, served at once to fill him with reverence, and to keep in abeyance every emotion of a tenderer nature. We are all prone to believe ourselves incapable of that of which we are not actually guilty. The boy, under the restraining and chilling influence of this brilliant icicle, really believed himself no longer capable of anything more than a very platonic affection for a beautiful young woman. In this pleasant state of mind, pursuing the game alone through the forest, he sees the flight and recapture of Amoret, just mentioned.

[But] that same gentle Squire arrived in place,  
Where this same curséd Caitiff did appear  
Pursuing that fair Lady full of fear :  
And now he her quite overtaken had ;  
And now he her away with him did bear  
Under his arm, as seeming wondrous glad,  
That by his grinning laughter mote far off be read.

Which dreary sight the gentle Squire espying,  
Doth haste to cross him by the nearest way,  
Led with that woful Lady's piteous crying,  
And him assails with all the might he may :  
Yet will not he the lovely spoil down lay,  
But with his craggy club in his right hand  
Defends himself, and saves his gotten prey :  
Yet had it been right hard him to withstand,  
But that he was full light and nimble on the land.

Thereto the Villain uséd craft in fight :  
For, ever when the Squire his javelin shook,  
He held the Lady forth before him right,  
And with her body, as a buckler, broke  
The puissance of his intended stroke :  
And if it chanced (as needs it must in fight),  
Whilst he on him was greedy to be wroke,  
That any little blow on her did light,  
Then would he laugh aloud, and gather great delight.

Which subtile sleight did him encumber much,  
And made him oft, when he would strike, forbear ;  
For hardly could he come the Carl to touch,  
But that he her must hurt, or hazard near :  
Yet he his hand so carefully did bear,  
That at the last he did himself attain,  
And therein left the pike-head of his spear :  
A stream of coal-black blood thence gushed amain,  
That all her silken garments did with blood bestain.

With that he threw her rudely on the floor,  
And, laying both his hands upon his glave,  
With dreadful strokes let drive at him so sore,  
That forced him fly aback, himself to save :  
Yet he therewith so felly still did rave,  
That scarce the Squire his hand could once uprear,  
But, for advantage, ground unto him gave,  
Tracing and traversing, now here, now there ;  
For bootless thing it was to think such blows to bear.

The Squire, then, with all his force and skill, is not able to effect a rescue. This is reserved for Belphebe herself, the symbol of Chastity, who next appears. *At her approach the impure monster instantly slinks back towards his den.*

Whilst thus in battle they embusied were,  
Belphebe, ranging in her forest wide,  
The hideous noise of their huge strokes did hear,  
And drew thereto, making her ear her guide :

Whom when that Thief approaching nigh espied  
With bow in hand and arrows ready bent,  
He by his former combat would not bide,  
But flew away with ghastly dreariment,  
Well knowing her to be his death's sole instrument.

Whom seeing fly, she speedily pursued  
With wingéd feet, as nimble as the wind,  
And ever in her bow she ready shewed  
The arrow to his deadly mark designed :  
As when Latona's daughter, cruel kind,  
In vengeance of her mother's great disgrace,  
With fell despite her cruel arrows tined  
Gainst woful Niobe's unhappy race,  
That all the Gods did moan her miserable case.

So well she sped her, and so far she ventered,  
That, ere unto his hellish den he raught,  
Even as he ready was there to have entered,  
She sent an arrow forth with mighty draught,  
That in the very door him overcaught,  
And, in his nape arriving through it thrilled  
His greedy throat, therewith in two distraught,  
That all his vital spirits thereby spilled,  
And all his hairy breast with gory blood was filled.

Whom when on ground she grovelling saw to roll,  
She ran in haste his life to have bereft ;  
But, ere she could him reach, the sinful soul,  
Having his carrion corse quite senseless left,  
Was fled to hell, surcharged with spoil and theft :  
Yet over him she there long gazing stood,  
And oft admired his monstrous shape, and oft  
His mighty limbs, whilst all with filthy blood  
The place there overflown seemed like a sudden flood.

Thenceforth she passed into his dreadful den,  
Where nought but darksome dreariness she found,  
Ne creature saw, but hearkened now and then  
Some little whispering, and soft-groaning sound.



With that she asked, what ghosts there under ground  
Lay hid in horror of eternal night;  
And bade them, if so be they were not bound,  
To come and show themselves before the light,  
Now freed from fear and danger of that dismal Wight.

Then forth the sad Æmylia issued,  
Yet trembling every joint through former fear;  
And after her the hag, there with her mewed,  
A foul and loathsome creature, did appear;  
A leman fit for such a lover dear:  
That moved Belphebe her no less to hate,  
Than for to rue the other's heavy cheer;  
Of whom she gan inquire of her estate;  
Who all to her at large, as happened, did relate.

The monster, fleeing from Belphebe, had left Amoret, bruised and wounded, upon the ground. Timias, leaving the pursuit of the monster to Belphebe, applied himself immediately to recover Amoret from her swoon. He raised her head gently from the earth—

From her fair eyes wiping the dewy wet  
Which softly stilled, and kissing them atween,  
And handling soft the hurts which she did get.

Poor Timias! An hour since, no one could have made him believe that there was left in his heart any care but to hunt the deer and track the forest. Under the tutelage of Belphebe and her nymphs, he had schooled himself, he supposed, into being a real pupil of their cheerless philosophy. But Amoret was no ordinary woman; and Timias, apart from his extraordinary circumstances, was but an ordinary man; and, in much less time than has been occupied in the narrative, resolution was melting like wax beneath the sunny rays of beauty and loveliness.

How unfortunate! At this critical and certainly

somewhat doubtful posture of affairs, the peerless virgin, Belphebe, returning from killing the monster, found her convert trying to resuscitate the beautiful lady from her swoon by what had much more the appearance of caresses than of surgery. A single glance of Belphebe's practised eye read the whole story. Her first impulse was to transfix them both on the spot. Changing her mind, she came stealthily very near to the busy young gentleman, before he discovered her approach—

*“Is this the faith?”* she said—and said no more,  
But turned her face, and fled away for evermore.

In vain did he try to explain his conduct. Not a word would she listen to. He attempted to follow. A keen arrow from her quiver, pointed towards his person, forced him to retreat. Brooding over his loss of the favour of his benefactress, he resolved to retire from all haunt of men or beasts, and devote himself to the life of a solitary. There he fell into a settled melancholy.

At last, when long he followed had in vain,  
Yet found no ease of grief nor hope of grace,  
Unto those woods he turned back again,  
Full of sad anguish and in heavy case :  
And, finding there fit solitary place  
For woful wight, chose out a gloomy glade,  
Where hardly eye mote see bright heaven's face  
For mossy trees, which covered all with shade  
And sad melancholy ; there he his cabin made.

His wonted warlike weapons all he broke  
And threw away, with vow to use no more,  
Ne thenceforth ever strike in battle stroke,  
Ne ever word to speak to woman more ;

But in that wilderness, of men forlore  
And of the wicked world forgotten quite,  
His hard mishap in dolour to deplore,  
And waste his wretched days in woful plight:  
So on himself to wreak his folly's own despite.

And eke his garment, to be thereto meet,  
He wilfully did cut and shape anew;  
And his fair locks, that wont with ointment sweet  
To be embalmed, and sweat out dainty dew,  
He let to grow and grisly to concrew,\*  
Uncombed, uncurled, and carelessly unshed;  
That in short time his face they overgrew,  
And over all his shoulders did dispread,  
That who he whilom was, uneath was to be read.

There he continued in this careful plight,  
Wretchedly wearing out his youthly years,  
Through wilful penury consuméd quite,  
That like a pinéd ghost he soon appears:  
For other food than that wild forest bears,  
Ne other drink there did he ever taste  
Than running water tempered with his tears,  
The more his weakened body so to waste:  
That out of all men's knowledge he was worn at last.

So complete was the Squire's disguise, that even his  
own Lord, Prince Arthur, who accidentally passed that  
way, did not recognise him.

For on a day, by fortune as it fell,  
His own dear Lord, Prince Arthur, came that way,  
Seeking adventures where he mote hear tell;  
And as he through the wandering wood did stray,  
Having espied his cabin far away,  
He to it drew, to weet who there did won;  
Weening therein some holy hermit lay,  
That did resort of sinful people shun;  
Or else some woodman shrouded there from scorching sun.

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\* *Conorew* (Lat. *concreseo*), to grow together, become matted.

Arriving there he found this wretched man  
 Spending his days in dolour and despair,  
 And, through long fasting, waxen pale and wan,  
 All overgrown with rude and rugged hair ;  
 That albeit his own dear Squire he were,  
 Yet he him knew not, ne avised at all ;  
 But like strange wight, whom he had seen no where,  
 Saluting him, gan into speech to fall,  
 And pity much his plight, that lived like outcast thrall.

But to his speech he answeréd no whit,  
 But stood still mute, as if he had been dumb,  
 Ne sign of sense did show, ne common wit,  
 As one with grief and anguish overcome ;  
 And unto everything did answer mum :  
 And ever, when the Prince unto him spake,  
 He louted lowly, as did him become,  
 And humble homage did unto him make ;  
 Midst sorrow showing joyous semblance for his sake.

At which his uncouth guise and usage quaint  
 The Prince did wonder much, yet could not guess  
 The cause of that his sorrowful constraint ;  
 Yet weened, by secret signs of manliness  
 Which close appeared in that rude brutishness,  
 That he whilom some gentle swain had been,  
 Trained up in feats of arms, and knightliness ;  
 Which he observed, by that he him had seen  
 To wield his naked sword and try the edges keen ;

And eke by that he saw on every tree  
 How he the name of One engraven had,  
 Which likely was his liefest Love to be,  
 From whom he now so sorely was bestead ;  
 Which was by him BELPHŒBE rightly read :  
 Yet who was that Belphebe he ne wist ;  
 Yet saw he often how he waxéd glad  
 When he it heard, and how the ground he kissed  
 Wherein it written was, and how himself he blessed.



Then, when he long had markéd his demeanour,  
 And saw that all he said and did was vain,  
 Ne ought mote make him change his wonted tenor,  
 Ne ought mote cease to mitigate his pain;  
 He left him there in languor to remain,  
 Till time for him should remedy provide,  
 And him restore to former grace again:

\* \* \* \*

Perhaps there is not in the whole Fairy Queen a more beautiful episode than that of the DOVE, which visited Timias in his banishment. The extracts which follow, will explain themselves.

[Thus then] it fell to this unhappy Boy,  
 Whose tender heart the fair Belphebe had  
 With one stern look so daunted, that no joy  
 In all his life, which afterwards he led,  
 He ever tasted; but with penance sad  
 And pensive sorrow pined and wore away,  
 Ne ever laughed, ne once showed countenance glad;  
 But always wept and wailéd night and day,  
 As blasted blossom through heat doth languish and decay:

Till on a day, as in his wonted wise  
 His dole he made, there chanced a turtle Dove  
 To come, where he his dolours did devise,  
 That likewise late had lost her dearest love,  
 Which loss her made like passion also prove:  
 Who seeing his sad plight, her tender heart  
 With dear compassion deeply did enmove,  
 That she gan moan his undeservéd smart,  
 And with her doleful accent bear with him a part.

She sitting by him, as on ground he lay,  
 Her mournful notes full piteously did frame,  
 And thereof made a lamentable lay,  
 So sensibly compiled that in the same  
 Him seeméd oft he heard his own right name.

With that he forth would pour so plenteous tears,  
And beat his breast unworthy of such blame,  
And knock his head, and rend his rugged hairs,  
That could have pierced the hearts of tigers and of bears.

Thus, long this gentle bird to him did use  
Withouten dread of peril to repair  
Unto his won, and with her mournful muse  
Him to recomfort in his greatest care,  
That much did ease his mourning and misfare :  
And every day, for guerdon of her song,  
He part of his small feast to her would share ;  
That, at the last, of all his wo and wrong  
Companion she became, and so continued long.

Upon a day, as she him sate beside,  
By chance he certain moniments forth drew,  
Which yet with him as relics did abide  
Of all the bounty which Belphebe threw  
On him, whilst goodly grace she did him shew ;  
Amongst the rest a jewel rich he found,  
That was a ruby of right perfect hue,  
Shaped like a heart yet bleeding of the wound,  
And with a little golden chain about it bound.

The same he took, and with a riband new,  
In which his Lady's colours were, did bind  
About the turtle's neck, that with the view  
Did greatly solace his engrievéd mind.  
All unawares the bird, when she did find  
Herself so decked, her nimble wings displayed,  
And flew away as lightly as the wind :  
Which sudden accident him much dismayed ;  
And, looking after long, did mark which way she strayed.

But whenas long he lookéd had in vain,  
Yet saw her forward still to make her flight,  
His weary eye returned to him again,  
Full of discomfort and disquiet plight,  
That both his jewel he had lost so light,

And eke his dear companion of his care.  
But that sweet bird departing flew forthright,  
Through the wide region of the wasteful air,  
Until she came where wonnéd his Belphœbe fair.

There found she her (as then it did betide)  
Sitting in covert shade of arbours sweet,  
After late weary toil which she had tried  
In savage chase, to rest as seemed her meet.  
There she, alighting, fell before her feet,  
And gan to her her mournful plaint to make,  
As was her wont, thinking to let her weet  
The great tormenting grief that for her sake  
Her gentle Squire through her displeasure did partake.

She, her beholding with attentive eye,  
At length did mark about her purple breast  
That precious jewel, which she formerly  
Had known right well with coloured ribands dressed :  
Therewith she rose in haste, and her addressed  
With ready hand it to have reft away ;  
But the swift bird obeyed not her behest,  
But swerved aside, and there again did stay ;  
She followed her, and thought again it to assay.

And ever, when she nigh approached, the dove  
Would flit a little forward, and then stay  
Till she drew near, and then again remove :  
So tempting her still to pursue the prey,  
And still from her escaping soft away :  
Till that at length into that forest wide  
She drew her far, and led with slow delay :  
In the end she her unto that place did guide,  
Whereas that woful man in languor did abide.

Eftsoons she flew unto his fearless hand,  
And there a piteous ditty now devised,  
As if she would have made him understand  
His sorrow's cause, to be of her despised :  
Whom when she saw in wretched weeds disguised,

With hairy glib\* deformed, and meagre face,  
 Like ghost late risen from his grave agrized,†  
 She knew him not, but pitied much his case,  
 And wished it were in her to do him any grace.

He, her beholding, at her feet down fell  
 And kissed the ground on which her sole did tread,  
 And washed the same with water which did well  
 From his moist eyes, and like two streams proceed ;  
 Yet spake no word, whereby she might aread  
 What mister wight he was, or what he meant ;  
 But, as one daunted with her presence dread,  
 Only few rueful looks unto her sent,  
 As messengers of his true meaning and intent.

At length, then, the unfortunate Squire recovers the favour of his Mistress, and is once more admitted to her service. This remarkable episode, detailing the temporary alienation of Belphebe from Timias, his self-imposed banishment, and subsequent reconciliation, is universally interpreted as containing an allusion to a well-known historical event. Sir Walter Raleigh, while professing the most chivalrous and disinterested attachment to the person of his sovereign, the Virgin Queen, was unfortunately detected in a criminal intrigue with one of her maids of honour!

Let us return to the narrative. Amoret, abandoned to her fate both by Timias and Belphebe, awoke at length from her swoon. Her deliverers had disappeared, but she was not alone. Another damsel, Æmylia, it will be recollected, had been the companion of her distress in the Cave of Lust. The two ladies muse awhile upon their forlorn situation, when a stranger appears, travelling through the wood, a Knight of noble aspect and gentle mien. The reader

\* *Glib*, mustachio.

† *Agrieved*, disfigured.



soon recognises him as the mighty deliverer who has already appeared in so many cases of emergency. It is indeed PRINCE ARTHUR. The very announcement relieves the mind and gives assurance that the day of deliverance cannot be far off. Prince Arthur puts both of the ladies upon his horse, and walks on foot by their side. Thus they travel together. At night, they stop at a hut, the abode of a miserable old bel-dame, named SLANDER.

So when that forest they had passéd well,  
 A little cottage far away they spied,  
 To which they drew ere night upon them fell ;  
 And, entering in, found none therein abide,  
 But one old woman sitting there beside  
 Upon the ground in ragged rude attire,  
 With filthy locks about her scattered wide,  
 Gnawing her nails for fellness and for ire,  
 And thereout sucking venom to her parts entire.

A foul and loathly creature sure in sight,  
 And in conditions to be loathed no less :  
 For she was stuffed with rancour and despite  
 Up to the throat, that oft with bitterness  
 It forth would break and gush in great excess,  
 Pouring out streams of poison and of gall  
 Gainst all that truth or virtue do profess ;  
 Whom she with leasings lewdly did miscall  
 And wickedly backbite : her name men SLANDER call.

Her nature is, all goodness to abuse,  
 And causeless crimes continually to frame,  
 With which she guiltless persons may accuse,  
 And steal away the crown of their good name :  
 Ne ever Knight so bold, ne ever Dame  
 So chaste and loyal lived, but she would strive  
 With forgéd cause them falsely to defame ;  
 Ne ever thing so well was done alive,  
 But she with blame would blot, and of due praise deprive.

Her words were not, as common words are meant,  
T' express, the meaning of the inward mind,  
But noisome breath, and poisonous spirit sent  
From inward parts, with cankered malice lined,  
And breathéd forth with blast of bitter wind ;  
Which passing through the ears would pierce the heart,  
And wound the soul itself with grief unkind :  
For, like the stings of asps that kill with smart,  
Her spiteful words did prick and wound the inner part.

The Prince and the two beautiful Ladies spend the night at the hut of this miserable old woman. Passing forward on their journey in the morning, she follows them with foul aspersions and reproaches. While the generous reader is filled with pity for the sorrowful dames, and admiration for the heroic Prince, this vile woman sees in their condition nothing but grounds for doubt and foul surmise, and entertains for them no feelings but those of the basest suspicion. So true it is, that

—“ They who credit crime, are they who feel  
Their own hearts weak to unresisted sin ;  
Memory, not judgment, prompts the thoughts which steal  
O'er minds like these, an easy faith to win ;  
And tales of broken truth are still believed  
Most readily by those who have themselves deceived.”\*

The bee sucks its honey from the same plant which the viper turns into venom. In moral, as in material vision, the colour of objects depends far more upon the organ of vision and the intervening medium, than upon anything inherent in the objects themselves. I have no sort of respect for that species of talent which bases its reputation entirely upon the ability to find

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\* Mrs. Norton.

fault. To discover and appreciate what is good, is a far more difficult task than to detect what is evil. The two states of mind differ, as wisdom differs from cunning. The one sees only evil: the other sees both evil and good. The man who would be thought to possess a profound insight into human nature, because he can suggest a base motive for every appearance of goodness, draws not only his premises from a bad heart, but his logic from a narrow head. The charity which "hopeth all things," and which finds something good in all things, is not a surer index of moral, than of intellectual greatness. In woman, especially, the disposition to see only the dark shades in the picture of human character, is odious in the extreme, and is fitly represented by the foul old woman already in part described. *Nothing is all dark.* There cannot be a picture without its bright spots; and the steady contemplation of what is bright in others, has a reflex influence upon the beholder. It reproduces what it reflects. Nay, it seems to leave an impress even upon the countenance. The features, from having a dark and sinister aspect, become open, serene, and sunny. A countenance so impressed, has neither the vacant stare of the idiot, nor the crafty, penetrating look of the basilisk, but the clear, placid aspect of truth and goodness. The woman who has such a face is beautiful. She has a beauty which varies not with the features, which changes not with years. It is beauty of expression. *It is the only kind of beauty which can be relied upon for a permanent influence with the other sex.*

But let us return to the old hag, Slander.

Soon as they thence departed were afore,  
That shameful Hag, the slander of her sex,  
Them followed fast, and them reviled sore,  
Him calling thief, . . . that much did vex  
His noble heart: thereto she did annex  
False crimes and facts, such as they never meant,  
That those two ladies much ashamed did wax:  
The more did she pursue her lewd intent,  
And railed and raged, till she had all her poison spent.

At last, when they were passéd out of sight,  
Yet she did not her spiteful speech forbear,  
But after them did bark, and still backbite,  
Though there were none her hateful words to hear;  
Like as a cur doth felly bite and tear  
The stone which passéd stranger at him threw;  
So she, them seeing past the reach of ear,  
Against the stones and trees did rail anew,  
Till she had dulled the sting, which in her tongue's end  
grew.

Prince Arthur and the sorrowful Ladies continue to travel as before, he on foot and they two upon his horse. At length they spy a Squire and a Dwarf, fleeing as for life, and after them, in close pursuit, a pagan giant, named Corflambo, (inflaming the heart.) Arthur slays this pagan, and releases the captives found in his castle, among whom is the lover of Æmylia. The most remarkable thing about this Giant Corflambo, was the radiance of fire and light from his eyes, which had the power of consuming all who withstood him. There are persons, both men and women, who exert a powerful and mysterious influence by their *eyes*; who have the power, by a look, to enkindle in the hearts of others the undeveloped sparks of evil.



Corflambo seems to have been meant by Spenser as the personification of this principle. In his object, he is not unlike the ruffian who carried off Amoret. It is in the means they differ, just as a self-suggested impulse arising from causes within the heart, differs from the same impulse, set in motion by influences darted into the mind from without.

Arthur, having destroyed Corflambo, abode some time at his castle, among other things to restore his own strength and that of Amoret, who had not yet recovered entirely from the bruises and hard treatment which she had received in the forest. While at the castle, some of the minor characters, whose names I have purposely suppressed, are married. The justice, discretion, delicacy, and kind consideration of the wants of all, displayed in the arrangements of Prince Arthur at the castle of Corflambo, maintain in the reader's mind the high idea conceived of him at his first appearance. He is everywhere noble and princely. The castle of Corflambo was well furnished with the means of hospitable entertainment, which were likely to be put in requisition under the auspices of its present victor. Leaving the party to enjoy a few days of needed repose in these comfortable quarters, let us turn our attention to a different scene.

Behold upon a plain a company of Knights with ladies, squires, and attendants. The Knights are some of those who had been at the tournament of Sir Satyrane and had failed to win the Girdle. Four of these, Druon, Claribel, Blandamour, and Paridel, instigated by Duessa and At , are quarrelling among themselves, about the award. Two others are standing by as spectators. They are Britomart and Scudamour. On

their attempting to mediate between the combatants, the latter cease quarrelling with each other, and commence an attack upon the pacificators. This attack is the more furious, for the remembrance of the defeat which Britomart had given them at the tournament. Here, then, upon this solitary plain, with none at hand to see fair play, they resolve to wreak their vengeance.

Full oftentimes did Britomart assay  
To speak to them, and some emparlance move;  
But they for nought their cruel hands would stay,  
Ne lend an ear to ought that might behove.  
As when an eager mastiff once doth prove  
The taste of blood of some engoréd beast,  
No words may rate, nor rigour him remove  
From greedy hold of that his bloody feast:  
So, little did they hearken to her sweet behest.

Whether the enchantment had vanished from the point of that Heben Spear, since the confession by Britomart of her love to Artegall, is more than I feel at liberty to say. I only know, she and Scudamour are hard beset, and the reader is not loth to see in the distance a noble Knight approaching. His armour and his bearing cannot be mistaken. PRINCE ARTHUR again appears; and Britomart and Scudamour are rescued.

But there is a state of the mind in which even danger is a relief, and deliverance from it is regarded as a misfortune. What boots it to Scudamour, whether slain by his enemies or courted by his friends? All his sources of joy were contained in one loved object, and she seems never more about to bless his eyes.

“ For from the first that I her love professed,  
Unto this hour, this present luckless hour,  
I never joyéd happiness nor rest;  
But thus turmoiled from one to other stour,  
I waste my life, and do my days devour  
In wretched anguish and incessant wo,  
Passing the measure of my feeble power;  
That, living thus a wretch, and loving so,  
I neither can my love, ne yet my life forego.”

But cheer up, noble Scudamour ! Not in vain hast thou endured these long months of anguish and separation. Prince Arthur, when he appeared, came not unattended. There was beside him, methought, a lady, closely veiled. Lift the veil, gentle reader, and show to the astonished Scudamour, his long-lost bride, his Amoret !

Scudamour, possessed at last of his bride, is called upon to explain to the company by what means he first won for himself a woman who had been sought by so many distinguished Knights. His name, Scudamour (*scutum* a shield, and *amor* love), is indicative, in part, of the exploit which had been crowned with such brilliant success. The birth of Amoret has been before hinted at. She was the twin sister of Belphebe. Taken, like her, in infancy, from her mother, and nurtured entirely by her foster-mother, Venus, she became in time the perfect model of female loveliness. Venus offered her in marriage as a prize to any Knight who could win her by the performance of a feat presently to be named. Such a prize was not likely to be overlooked by the gay cavaliers of Fairydom. Great were the heart-burnings, many were the attempts, many the failures. Among others, Scudamour, now arrived at manhood, having just put on his

maiden and untried arms, resolved to make a trial. His resolution was at once bold and modest;—bold almost to presumption as to its object, yet eminently modest and winning in its manner.

“What time the fame of this renowned prize  
Flew first abroad, and all men’s ears possessed;  
I, having arms then taken, gan advise  
To win me honour by some noble gest,  
And purchase me some place amongst the best.  
I boldly thought (so young men’s thoughts are bold),  
That this same brave emprise for me did rest,  
And that both Shield, and She whom I behold,  
Might be my lucky lot; since all by lot we hold.

The place where this notable adventure was to be performed, was the Temple of Venus. The island in which this temple was situated, abounded in all sorts of delights, and was by nature utterly inaccessible except at one point. At that point was a massive bridge, extending from the mainland to the island. The entrance to the bridge was protected by a castle of great strength, guarded by twenty tried and valiant Knights. Whoever would win Amoret, must enter the temple; to enter the temple, he must first reach the island; to reach the island, he must cross the bridge; to cross the bridge, he must first pass the tower, and overcome successively in single combat every one of those twenty chosen Knights. *So closely entrenched is woman’s heart. So impenetrable are her defences, except to him who has the “Open Sesame” thereto.*

Let us return to the geography of this rare place. On the mainland, in front of the castle which guarded the bridge, was an open plain. In the midst of this plain stood a marble pillar. On this pillar hung a



shield. It was the SHIELD OF LOVE (Scutum, amor.) Under the shield were written these words :

“Blesséd the man that well can use this bliss :  
Whose ever be the Shield, fair AMORET be his.”

To win this shield, then, this is the difficulty. “Hic labor, hoc opus est.” *The main difficulty in taking the fortress of woman’s heart is with the out-works.* Only carry these, only win her confidence, and all the rest is as easy as—the “House that Jack built.” This is the shield, that guards the bridge, that leads to the island, that upholds the temple, that contains in it,—not the peerless Belphebe—no awful brow, or life-threatening weapons—no feeling averse to what is after all the natural state of woman—but, on the contrary, a frame of mind, if I may be excused the expression, “more ready to give than to receive.”

But, once more, to return to the story. Scudamour shall tell it in his own modest way.

“Before that Castle was an open plain,  
And in the midst thereof a pillar placed ;  
On which this Shield, of many sought in vain,  
The SHIELD OF LOVE, whose guerdon me hath graced,  
Was hanged on high with golden ribands laced ;  
And in the marble stone was written this,  
With golden letters goodly well enchased :  
*Blesséd the man that well can use this bliss ;  
Whose ever be the Shield, fair Amoret be his.*

“Which when I read, my heart did inly yearn,  
And pant with hope of that adventure’s hap :  
Ne stayéd further news thereof to learn,  
But with my spear upon the Shield did rap,  
That all the Castle ringéd with the clap.

Straight forth issued a Knight all armed to proof,  
And bravely mounted to his most mishap:  
Who, staying nought to question from aloof,  
Ran fierce at me, that fire glanced from his horse's hoof.

“ Whom boldly I encountered (as I could),  
And by good fortune shortly him unseated.  
Eftsoons outsprung two more of equal mould;  
But I them both with equal hap defeated:  
So all the twenty I likewise entreated,  
And left them groaning there upon the plain.  
Then, pressing to the pillar, I repeated  
The read thereof for guerdon of my pain,  
And, taking down the Shield, with me did it retain.

“ So forth without impediment I passed,  
Till to the bridge's utter gate I came;  
The which I found sure locked and chained fast.  
I knocked, but no man answered me by name;  
I called, but no man answered to my claim:  
Yet I persévered still to knock and call;  
Till at the last I spied within the same  
Where one stood peeping through a crevice small,  
To whom I called aloud, half angry therewithal.

“ That was to weet the porter of the place,  
Unto whose trust the charge thereof was lent:  
His name was Doubt, that had a double face,  
Th' one forward looking, th' other backward bent,  
Therein resembling Janus ancient,  
Which hath in charge the ingate of the year:  
And evermore his eyes about him went,  
As if some provéd peril he did fear,  
Or did misdoubt some ill whose cause did not appear.

“ On th' one side he, on th' other sate Delay,  
Behind the gate, that none her might espy;  
Whose manner was, all passengers to stay  
And entertain with her occasions sly;  
Through which some lost great hope unheedily,

Which never they recover might again ;  
And others, quite excluded forth, did lie  
Long languishing there in unpitied pain,  
And seeking often entrance afterwards in vain.

“ Me whenas he had privily espied,  
Bearing the Shield which I had conquered late,  
He kenned it straight, and to me opened wide :  
So in I passed, and straight he closed the gate.  
But being in, Delay in close await  
Caught hold on me, and thought my steps to stay,  
Feigning full many a fond excuse to prate,  
And time to steal, the treasure of man’s day,  
Whose smallest minute lost no riches render may.

“ But by no means my way I would forslow  
For ought that ever she could do or say ;  
But from my lofty steed dismounting low  
Passed forth on foot, beholding all the way  
The goodly works, and stones of rich assay,  
Cast into sundry shapes by wondrous skill,  
That like on earth nowhere I reckon may ;  
And underneath, the river rolling still  
With murmur soft, that seemed to serve the workman’s will.

“ Thence forth I passéd to the second gate,  
The Gate of Good Desert, whose goodly pride  
And costly frame were long here to relate ;  
The same to all stood always open wide ;  
But in the porch did evermore abide  
An hideous Giant, dreadful to behold,  
That stopped the entrance with his spacious stride,  
And with the terror of his countenance bold  
Full many did affray, that else fain enter would :

“ His name was Danger, dreaded over all ;  
Who day and night did watch and duly ward  
From fearful coward’s entrance to forestall  
And faint-heart fools, whom show of peril hard  
Could terrify from fortune’s fair award :

For oftentimes faint hearts, at first espial  
 Of his grim face, were from approaching scared :  
 Unworthy they of grace, whom one denial  
 Excludes from fairest hope withouten further trial.

“ Yet many doughty warriors, often tried  
 In greater perils to be stout and bold,  
 Durst not the sternness of his look abide :  
 But, soon as they his countenance did behold,  
 Began to faint, and feel their courage cold.  
 Again, some other, that in hard assays  
 Were cowards known, and little count did hold,  
 Either through gifts, or guile, or such like ways,  
 Crept in by stooping low, or stealing of the kays.\*

“ But I, though meanest man of many moe,  
 Yet much disdainning unto him to lout,  
 Or creep between his legs, so in to go,  
 Resolved him to assault with manhood stout,  
 And either beat him in or drive him out.  
 Eftsoons, advancing that enchanted Shield,  
 With all my might I gan to lay about :  
 Which when he saw, the glaive† which he did wield  
 He gan forthwith t’ avale,‡ and way unto me yield.

“ So, as I entered, I did backward look,  
 For fear of harm that might lie hidden there ;  
 And lo ! his hindparts, whereof heed I took,  
 Much more deforméd, fearful, ugly were  
 Than all his former parts did erst appear :  
 For Hatred, Murder, Treason, and Despite,  
 With many more lay in ambushment there,  
 Awaiting to entrap the wareless wight  
 Which did not them prevent with vigilant foresight.”

Scudamour, whose valour in action is equalled only  
 by his modesty in speaking of it, having thus stoutly  
 won his way across the bridge, finds himself upon an

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\* *Kays*, keys.

† *Glaive*, sword.

‡ *Avale*, lower, let fall.



island as beautiful and enchanting as that which contained the Bower of Bliss. The theme is inviting, but we must imitate our hero, and hasten on. The reader will have, therefore, to imagine the island as enriched with whatever in nature or art could make it attractive; its beauties and adornments true and real, not forged and delusory like those of the Bower of Bliss; and itself fitted up, not for the revels of a wicked enchantress, but for the protection and honour of virtuous Womanhood. The island in short was the spot chosen by Venus for the abode of Amoret.

“Thus having past all peril, I was come  
Within the compass of that Island’s space;  
The which did seem, unto my simple doom,  
The only pleasant and delightful place  
That ever trodden was of footing’s trace:  
For all that Nature by her mother-wit  
Could frame in earth, and form of substance base,  
Was there; and all that Nature did omit,  
Art, playing second Nature’s part, suppliéd it.

“No tree, that is of count, in greenwood grows,  
From lowest juniper to cedar tall;  
No flower in field, that dainty odour throws,  
And decks his branch with blossoms over all,  
But there was planted, or grew natural:  
Nor sense of man so coy and curious nice,  
But there might find to please itself withal;  
Nor heart could wish for any quaint device,  
But there it present was, and did frail sense entice.”

Wandering through the groves and among the shady arbours of this blissful Island, Scudamour noticed innumerable pairs of accepted lovers, discoursing of their loves as they sat or walked, without restraint, and without unwelcome interruptions from third persons.

Lovers were not the only occupants of these happy abodes. There was a kindred but yet different band here to be seen. Particular attention is invited to this group, both as it shows the expansiveness of the author's ideas, and as it illustrates a remark already made, in regard to the natural connexion between the third and fourth Books of the Fairy Queen.

“But, far away from these, another sort  
Of lovers linkéd in true heart's consent ;  
Which lovéd not as these for like intent,  
But on chaste virtue groundéd their desire,  
Far from all fraud or feignéd blandishment ;  
Which, in their spirits kindling zealous fire,  
Brave thoughts and noble deeds did evermore aspire.

“Such were great Hercules, and Hylas dear ;  
True Jonathan, and David trusty tried ;  
Stout Theseus, and Pirithous his fere ;\*  
Pylades, and Orestes by his side ;  
Mild Titus, and Gesippus without pride ;  
Damon and Pythias, whom death could not sever :  
All these, and all that ever had been tied  
In bands of friendship, there did live for ever ;  
Whose lives although decayed, yet loves decayéd never.”

From these stanzas it will be perceived, that Spenser placed Friendship, as well as Love, under the protection of Venus. They are indeed generically the same, only with a specific difference. Love is friendship, and something more. Spenser, too, it will be noticed, has improved upon the classical idea of Venus herself, quite as much as he did upon that of her girdle. Spenser's Venus is not the Cyprian queen of

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\* *Fere* (frere), companion.

Ovid and Horace, but a being perfectly pure from moral taint;—Amoret herself, deified.

But true love never forgets its errand. It is no more to be withheld from its object by gayety and splendour, than by terror and peril. Scudamour is as earnest and straightforward in his purpose, as he is modest and courageous. The Island with all its delights is nothing compared with the Temple which it contains, and that Temple itself nothing to him compared with its lovely occupant.

“ Yet all those sights, and all that else I saw,  
Might not my steps withhold but that forthright  
Unto that purposed place I did me draw,  
Whereas my Love was lodgéd day and night,  
The Temple of great Venus, that is hight  
The Queen of Beauty, and of Love the mother,  
There worshippéd of every living wight;  
Whose goodly workmanship far passed all other  
That ever were on earth, all were they set together.”

Not stopping to describe this gorgeous edifice, let us approach at once the awful threshold. Observe as we enter, how appropriate are the objects, how eloquent the allegory!

“ I, much admiring that so goodly frame,  
Unto the porch approached, which open stood;  
But therein sat an amiable Dame,  
That seemed to be of very sober mood,  
And in her semblant showed great womanhood:  
Strange was her tire; for on her head a crown  
She wore, much like unto a Danisk hood,  
Powdered with pearl and stone; and all her gown  
Enwoven was with gold, that raught full low adown.

“ On either side of her two young men stood,  
Both strongly armed, as fearing one another;

Yet were they brethren both of half the blood,  
Begotten by two fathers of one mother,  
Though of contráry natures each to other :  
The one of them hight Love, the other Hate :  
Hate was the elder, Love the younger brother ;  
Yet was the younger stronger in his state  
Than th' elder, and him mastered still in all debate.

“Nathless that Dame so well them tempered both,  
That she them forcéd hand to join in hand,  
Albe that Hatred was thereto full loth,  
And turned his face away, as he did stand,  
Unwilling to behold that lovely band :  
Yet she was of such grace and virtuous might,  
That hér commandment he could not withstand,  
But bit his lip for felonous despite,  
And gnashed his iron tusks at that displeasing sight.

“Concord she clepéd was in common read,  
Mother of blesséd Peace and Friendship true ;  
They both her twins, both born of heavenly seed,  
And she herself likewise divinely grew ;  
The which right well her works divine did shew :  
For strength and wealth and happiness she lends,  
And strife and war and anger does subdue ;  
Of little much, of foes she maketh friends,  
And to afflicted minds sweet rest and quiet sends.”

Arrived at length within the inmost temple, let us survey the spot. The lofty roof rests upon a hundred marble pillars, each hung with crowns, chains, garlands, and other votive offerings. The whole area is strewn with fresh flowers, the whole air breathes of odours and incense rising from its hundred altars. Beside each altar is a huge brazen vessel wherein the votary may bathe in joy and amorous desire ; and each



altar and vessel is committed to a special attendant, a ministering youth of the gentler sex :—

“ For all the priests are Damsels in soft linen dight.”

In the midst of all these, stands one altar pre-eminent in size, beauty, and glory of appearance. By it stands the image of great Venus herself.

In the description of Venus and her rites, Spenser has followed chiefly the Egyptian mythology. I pass this part of the description, and proceed to that more immediately connected with the fate of our hero. Scudamour, while urging his suit before the image of Venus, espied not far off a group that strongly attracted his attention.

“ Whilst thus I spake, behold ! with happy eye  
I spied where at the Idol’s feet apart  
A bevy of fair Damsels close did lie,  
Waiting whenas the anthem should be sung on high.

“ The first of them did seem of riper years  
And graver countenance than all the rest ;  
Yet all the rest were eke her equal peers,  
Yet unto her obeyéd all the best :  
Her name was Womanhood ; that she expressed  
By her sad semblant and demeanour wise :  
For steadfast still her eyes did fixéd rest,  
Ne rove at random, after gazer’s guise,  
Whose luring baits ofttimes do heedless hearts entice.

“ And next to her sat goodly Shamefastness,  
Ne ever durst her eyes from ground uprear,  
Ne ever once did look up from her dess,\*  
As if some blame of evil she did fear,  
That in her cheeks made roses oft appear :

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\* Dess, desk.

And her against sweet Cheerfulness was placed,  
 Whose eyes, like twinkling stars in evening clear,  
 Were decked with smiles that all sad humours chased,  
 And darted forth delights the which her goodly graced.

“ And next to her sate sober Modesty,  
 Holding her hand upon her gentle heart ;  
 And her against sate comely Courtesy,  
 That unto every person knew her part :  
 And her before was seated overthwart  
 Soft Silence and submiss Obedience,  
 Both linked together never to dispart ;  
 Both gifts of God not gotten but from thence ;  
 Both garlands of his Saints against their foes’ offence.”

Who, but the author of the Fairy Queen, would have imagined such a scene and such companions for the votary of Venus ? Yet, is not the picture true to nature ? Does it not find a prompt response in every mind ? Was I not right in saying, Spenser has improved the classic myth respecting Venus herself, quite as much as that respecting her Girdle ?

But perhaps, with Scudamour, the reader’s heart begins to throb with expectation. Look again at that pure and sisterly group.

“ Thus sat they all around in seemly rate :  
 And in the midst of them a goodly Maid  
 (Even in the lap of Womanhood) there sat,  
 The which was all in lily white arrayed,  
 With silver streams amongst the linen strayed ;  
 Like to the Morn, when first her shining face  
 Hath to the gloomy world itself bewrayed :  
 That same was fairest AMORET in place,  
 Shining with beauty’s light and heavenly virtue’s grace.

“ Whom soon as I beheld, my heart gan throb  
 And wade in doubt what best were to be done :

For sacrilege me seemed the church to rob ;  
 And folly seemed to leave the thing undone,  
 Which with so strong attempt I had begun.  
 Then, shaking off all doubt and shamefast fear,  
 Which Lady's love I heard had never won  
 Mongst men of worth, I to her steppéd near,  
 And by the lily hand her laboured up to rear.

“ Thereat that foremost Matron me did blame,  
 And sharp rebuke for being over-bold ;  
 Saying it was to Knight unseemly shame,  
 Upon a récluse Virgin to lay hold,  
 That unto Venus' services was sold.

To whom I thus : Nay, but it fitteth best  
 For Cupid's man with Venus' maid to hold ;

\* \* \* \*

“ With that my Shield I forth to her did show,  
 Which all that while I closely had concealed :  
 At sight thereof she was with terror quelled,  
 And said no more : but I, which all that while,  
 The pledge of faith, her hand engagéd held,  
 For no intreaty would forego so glorious spoil.

“ And evermore upon the goddess' face  
 Mine eye was fixed, for fear of her offence :  
 Whom when I saw with amiable grace  
 To laugh on me, and favour my pretence,  
 I was emboldened with more confidence ;  
 And nought for niceness nor for envy sparing,  
 In presence of them all forth led her thence,  
 All looking on, and like astonished staring,  
 Yet to lay hand on her not one of all them daring.

“ She often prayed, and often me besought,  
 Sometime with tender tears to let her go,  
 Sometime with witching smiles : but yet, for nought  
 That ever she to me could say or do,  
 Could she her wishéd freedom from me woo ;  
 But forth I led her through the Temple gate,  
 By which I hardly past with much ado :

Thus safely with my Love I thence did wend.”  
So ended he his Tale ; where I this Canto end.

The Canto thus concluded is the tenth. I need not say, I consider it highly beautiful. I have quoted from it thus freely, not only for its beautiful imagery, and its melodious versification, but because it develops in so agreeable and satisfactory a manner the character of SCUDAMOUR. As the accepted lover of Amoret, the reader feels all along, that Scudamour *ought* to be a noble and worthy Knight. But it is not until we hear from his own mouth, this modest account of his exploit, that we understand and appreciate his real worth. His character has in it nothing to dazzle or astonish. It does not strike suddenly the imagination, but wins upon us by degrees, gaining successively our confidence, our sympathy, our admiration, our unreserved affection. He has not the thoughtful and solemn heroism of the Red-Cross Knight ; nor yet the faultless, but somewhat insipid composure of Sir Guyon ; he is at a still farther remove from the cruel levity of Paridel, and Blandamour. In his joys and his sorrows, his achievements and his perfections, his friendships and his love, he comes more within the pale of human sympathies, than any of the male characters in the Fairy Queen. He is indeed Spenser's idea of perfect Manhood, without superhuman endowments, or any extraordinary mission :—one to whom the heart goes out with a warm and inspiring confidence—a man, having the masculine ability, the strength, moral and physical, which secures to him the entire respect of his own sex, while, to the woman of his choice, he gives a love deep, earnest, abiding,



and unreserved,—the counterpart and correlative of Amoret's love for him.

No one, I am sure, who read the third Book, has forgotten poor Florimel. The author, at the end of the third Book, left her imprisoned by Proteus in a dismal submarine cave. There she has lain ever since. Every few Cantos, the author stops to shed a tear over her condition, but declares his entire inability to do anything for her relief. The eleventh Canto of the fourth Book opens with the following stanzas :

But ah ! for pity that I have thus long  
Left a fair Lady languishing in pain !  
Now well away ! that I have done such wrong,  
To let fair Florimel in bands remain,  
In bands of love, and in sad thralldom's chain ;  
From which unless some heavenly power her free  
By miracle, not yet appearing plain,  
She longer yet is like captived to be ;  
That even to think thereof it inly pities me.

Here need you to remember, how erewhile  
Unlovely Proteus, missing to his mind  
That Virgin's love to win by wit or wile,  
Her threw into a dungeon deep and blind,  
And there in chains her cruelly did bind,  
In hope thereby her to his bent to draw :  
For, whenas neither gifts nor graces kind  
Her constant mind could move at all he saw,  
He thought her to compel by cruelty and awe.

Deep in the bottom of an huge great rock  
The dungeon was, in which her bound he left,  
That neither iron bars, nor brazen lock,  
Did need to guard from force or secret theft  
Of all her lovers which would her have reft :  
For walled it was with waves, which raged and roared  
As they the cliff in pieces would have cleft ;

Besides, ten thousand monsters, foul abhorred,  
Did wait about it, gaping grisly, all begored.

And in the midst thereof did Horror dwell,  
And darkness dread that never viewéd day,  
Like to the baleful house of lowest hell,  
In which old Styx her agéd bones alway  
(Old Styx the grandame of the gods) doth lay.  
There did this luckless maid seven months abide,  
Ne ever evening saw, ne morning's ray,  
Ne ever from the day the night descried,  
But thought it all one night, that did no hours divide.

And all this was for love of Marinel,  
Who her despised (ah ! who would her despise !)  
And women's love did from his heart expel,  
And all those joys that weak mankind entice.

The story of Marinel, which has not been given, is necessary to the proper comprehension of that of Florimel. It is long, but I will endeavour to compress the substance of it into a few paragraphs.

Marinel was the son of the sea-nymph Cymoent, by an earthly sire. Educated by his mother with great care, Marinel became a noble and accomplished Knight, and attracted much attention by his feats of arms. His mother became at length apprehensive for his safety, in consequence of the reckless daring with which he pursued his adventures. Under the influence of this fear, she consulted a diviner, and was told that her son would indeed meet with his ruin, but it would be at the hand of a woman. Interpreting this to mean that he would fall in love with some woman, and so get into difficulty, she trained him to regard the sex with apprehension and doubt, to avoid in fact woman's society. Young, handsome, accomplished, intelligent, and graceful, Marinel was naturally the

object of admiration among the ladies attendant upon the Court of Fairy; perhaps not the less so from the fact of his indifference and reserve.

The prediction respecting the fate of Marinel had its fulfilment, but in a way very different from that which his mother expected. He fell, as has been before described, by the hand of Britomart, wounded not with the arrows of Cupid, or the glances of a bright eye, but literally, with the point of that enchanted spear. His mother, the sea-nymph Cymoent, mourned excessively over his death, and having transported his body to her watery bower, deep in the bottom of the sea, succeeded, by the help of remedies known only to the sea-gods and goddesses, in restoring him to life and health.

Other poets have made us familiar with scenes imagined to exist below the surface of the earth. It was left to the genius of Spenser to people the lower parts of the mighty deep with human sympathies. The descent into these submarine regions, and the great gathering of the gods and goddesses in the hall of Proteus, to witness the marriage of the Medway and the Thames, are described with much pomp and circumstance. Cymoent went, among the other marine lords and ladies, to this famous marriage, taking with her her son Marinel, now restored from his wounds. Being earth-begotten, he could not partake of the banquet, but remained a mere "looker-on in Vienna."

Great was the crowd of distinguished sea-gentry that thronged on this occasion the hall of Proteus, leagues below the surface of the ocean. Tired at length of looking at their strange faces, Marinel determined to take a stroll around the premises, and

view the curious architectural arrangements of the great sea-prince.

He had not wandered far, when he heard a human voice issuing from the narrow opening of a rock. The sound was rendered faint by distance, but seemed to come from some lonely being, confined far away under the cliff, beyond the reach of succour or of intercourse. The voice, though faint by distance, was distinct. It was the voice of a human being—it was the voice of a female. She was bewailing to herself her desolate and hard condition. As she was proceeding with her plaint, his heart, never before touched with what he had been taught to regard as a weakness, began to be seized with a new and strange commotion. He heard this female, in that distant inner chamber, recounting to herself the story of her woes, all endured because she refused to become the bride of an immortal, whose bride she refused to be, because she loved a mortal—and that mortal knew not of her love, and if he did, would not care, for it was the cruel, scornful Knight, Sir Marinel ! She ends her wail thus :—

“ Ye gods of seas, if any gods at all  
Have care of right, or ruth of wretch s wrong,  
By one or other way me woful thrall  
Deliver hence out of this dungeon strong,  
In which I daily dying am too long:  
And if ye deem me death for loving one  
That loves not me, then do it not prolong,  
But let me die and end my days at one,  
And let him live unloved, or love himself alone.

“ But if that life ye unto me decree,  
Then let me live, as lovers ought to do,  
And of my life’s dear Love belovéd be :  
And, if he should through pride your doom undo,



Do you by duress him compel thereto,  
And in this prison put him here with me ;  
One prison fittest is to hold us two :  
So had I rather to be thrall than free ;  
Such thralldom or such freedom let it surely be.

“ But, O vain judgment, and conditions vain,  
The which the prisoner points unto the free !  
The whiles I him condemn, and deem his pain,  
He where he lists goes loose, and laughs at me :  
So ever loose, so ever happy be !  
But whereso loose or happy that thou art,  
Know, *Marinel*, that all this is for thee !”

How the blood tingles in the Knight's veins, as he hears this unconscious confession from the most beautiful woman in Fairy Land ! He had not, in truth, been a real contemner of the sex. His heart had been merely pre-occupied with martial and knightly achievements, to the exclusion of the thought of woman. But henceforth, one all-excluding idea held possession of his breast ; and he rested not, night or day, until, by the intercession of Cymoent, and the all-powerful interposition of great Neptune himself, he gained the release, and became by sweet compact, the affianced lover, of the beautiful, the persecuted, the astonished, the too, too happy FLORIMEL !

## BOOK V.

### THE LEGEND OF ARTEGAL, OR OF JUSTICE.

Intimate Connexion between the Third and Fourth Books—The Reasons for this—Mission of Artegal—Definition of Justice—Artegal's Education by Astræa—His Sword, Chrysaor—The Iron Man, Talus—Punishment of Sangliere—Battle with Pollente—Execution of Munera—The Giant Innovation—Nuptials of Florimel—Tournament of Sir Marinel—Braggadocchio's Imposture—Vanishing of the Snowy Florimel—Decision of Artegal between the Brothers, Amidas and Brasidas—Artegal and Talus beset by Female Warriors—Radigund—Her Character—Her Battle with Artegal—Artegal in Thraldom—Radigund in Love—Love Agencies—Poor Clarin—Britomart's Uneasiness at the Absence of Artegal—She goes to his Rescue—The House of Dolon—The Temple of Isis—Battle between Britomart and Radigund—King Philip and the Spanish Armada—Artegal and Prince Arthur rescue Samient—Arthur's Battle with the Soudan—Punishment of Adicia—Synopsis of the Whole Book.

THE Fairy Queen is about three times the length of *Paradise Lost*. It is divided into six Books, and each Book into twelve Cantos. Each of the six Books was intended to be, and to some extent is, a separate poem, having a distinct subject, hero, and heroine, a beginning, middle, and end. The first Book is intended to illustrate Holiness; the second, Temperance; the third, Chastity; the fourth, Friendship; the fifth, Justice; and the sixth, Courtesy.

I have now gone through a somewhat detailed

account of the contents of the first four of these Books. It remains, that I attempt to unfold in like manner the two remaining Legends. Before doing so, I will make one remark both in explanation and defence of the author.

The reader cannot have failed to perceive, that the third and fourth Books, the Legends of Chastity and Friendship, are greatly wanting in separate unity. They run into each other, and blend together, as one Book. Britomart, Florimel, Amoret, Belphebe, Timias, Scudamour, Satyrane, and Marinell, who are the leading characters of these two Books, are quite as much connected with one as the other. They are the several strands of a cord which continues unbroken throughout. The painful interest which is awakened for Florimel in the very first Canto of the third Book, meets with no alleviation or relief, until the very last Canto of the fourth Book. This peculiarity of the third and fourth Books has been made the ground of critical objection. The author, it is said, professes in the third Book to give the adventure of Britomart, treating of Chastity; and in the fourth Book, the adventure of Cambel and Triamond, treating of Friendship. But these two topics and adventures do not stand out clearly and definitely to the imagination, as do those of the Red-Cross Knight and Sir Guyon, in the first and second Books. In other words, the third and fourth Books are wanting in separate unity. Such is the charge.

Admitting the fact, I deny the fault. The illustration of the principle of Chastity with its affiliated virtues and vices, necessarily involves a development of the passion of Love. Love and friendship are

bound together in a bundle of relations and affinities too intimate and tender to be rudely sundered at the mere dictum of a Procrustean criticism. It is, I contend, in accordance with the constitution of nature, and the established order of things, that Spenser has thus mixed up in one general action the development of these two principles. For, who would trust as a friend, the betrayer of female virtue? Or who is likely to be true in friendship, if not the man who loves and honours his wife? Who would entrust the honour of his sister or his daughter, to him who has been recreant to the laws of friendship? Or who would trust his own happiness to a woman who, in the relation of friendship, was cold, fickle, or insincere? Who does not see that domestic happiness can be wounded only through the sides of friendship?—that love is in truth friendship, only *a thousand times more of it*?

It is, therefore, I repeat, entirely in accordance with nature that these two Legends are thus intimately blended. So far from its being a blemish, I regard it rather as a beauty. The fault, if there is one, lies, I apprehend, merely in the author's sketch of his plan in the letter to Raleigh, not in his execution of the poem itself. The plan as sketched, has the unmeaning completeness of the chequer-board, or of the multiplication table. The actual poem has all the graceful irregularities incident to a narrative of human interests, or the development of human passions.

That the view of this subject which I have taken is the right one, will be farther obvious, I think, when we have gone through the following Books. All virtues are indeed to some extent connected. But between none of them does there exist such an intimate



connexion as that which exists between the two already named. Hence, in leaving these two, and passing to the illustration of Justice, the author resumes the manner of which he had given examples in the first and second Books. The Legend of Artegal, or of Justice, contains an action and interest almost complete in itself—not indeed isolated, for Britomart reappears and plays an important part—but quite as periodique as the Legend of Sir Guyon, or the Legend of the Red-Cross Knight. The same remark will be found applicable to the sixth Book, or the Legend of Courtesy.

With these prefatory remarks I proceed to introduce the reader to a new circle of acquaintances. Among them we shall receive, I trust, both entertainment and advantage, and form some lasting friendships: and that we may not at first feel ourselves entirely among strangers, several of our old friends will accompany us. We shall have the company of Britomart especially, as it was meet, since the adventure to be related is that of her now recognised and accepted lover, Sir Artegal.

Artegal, it will be recollected, was in pursuit of this adventure at the time of his remarkable meeting with Britomart. After the recognition, and the vows of affiance which succeeded, Artegal was bound, by the laws of chivalry, and in obedience to the behests of Gloriana, to pursue to its completion the adventure which had been assigned to him. The appearance of Artegal in the fourth Book, and the fact of his being the affianced lover of Britomart, have already made him partially known to the reader, and prepared the mind to receive with eagerness that more explicit

statement of his character and mission with which the fifth Book begins.

The particular adventure upon which Sir Artegal had been sent was this. Grantorto, an unrighteous and powerful tyrant, had wrested from the distressed Lady Irena her patrimonial possessions. Irena going to the Court of Gloriana for relief, the latter gave it in charge to Artegal to destroy the monster and reinstate the lady in her possessions. The battle itself between Artegal and Grantorto is in the twelfth Canto. All the preceding Cantos are occupied with preliminary and incidental adventures which Artegal meets on his way. These adventures are all strictly subsidiary to the main object of the Book, which is to exhibit some of the various forms and modifications of justice and injustice abroad in the world. The reader cannot fail to perceive how very similar is the plan of the story to those of the Red-Cross Knight, and of Sir Guyon. There is in each case one main adventure occurring in the twelfth Canto, with numerous intervening and subsidiary adventures occupying the previous Cantos.

JUSTICE, like Temperance, is used by Spenser in a very comprehensive sense. It is the "*suum cuique tribuere*" of the great Roman moralist—that general principle which has for its object, in all the multiplied relations of life, to secure to each his own. Justice has various names, according to the varying character of these relations. Justice between man and man, becomes Probity, Integrity, Honesty. Political Justice is that which exists in the administration of the affairs of state. Judicial Justice consists in ascertaining and declaring by public authority the rights

of individuals. Retributive Justice deals out rewards and punishments to those who have rights either to defend or to be defended. In like manner, Injustice assumes the various forms of Dishonesty, Bribery, Fraud, Oppression, &c.

There is indeed no form of human action, in which woman's influence is not felt. In the administration of Justice, however, whether public or private, civil or international, in meting out retribution to oppressors, or giving relief to the oppressed, it will be readily perceived, that she has a much less direct agency than in those departments of human action which grow out of the use or abuse of the social affections. We need not be disappointed, therefore, if we find in the Legend of Justice a less prodigal array of splendid female characters, than in some other Books of the Fairy Queen.

The first Canto begins with an account of Sir Artegal, showing his special fitness for the mission which had been assigned him. In early times—the golden age—before men had given themselves up to wickedness, *ASTRÆA*, the goddess of Justice, dwelt among men. It was from the lips of this divine instructress that Artegal had received from infancy those lessons of wisdom and right which had guided him in manhood. She had seen him when a boy playing among his companions, and was so pleased with the nobleness of his countenance, that she enticed him away, and took him to a cave. There, free from the influences of a corrupting world, and under her sole tutelage, the boy was trained in all the mysteries of that science whose end is “to give to each his own.”

For Artegal in Justice was upbrought  
Even from the cradle of his infancy,  
And all the depth of rightful doom was taught  
By fair *ASTRÆA*, with great industry,  
Whilst here on earth she livéd mortally :  
For, till the world from his perfection fell  
Into all filth and foul iniquity,  
*Astræa* here mongst earthly men did dwell,  
And in the rules of justice them instructed well.

Whiles through the world she walkéd in this sort,  
Upon a day she found this gentle child,  
Amongst his peers playing his childish sport ;  
Whom seeing fit, and with no crime defiled,  
She did allure with gifts and speeches mild  
To wend with her : so thence him far she brought  
Into a cave from company exiled,  
In which she nurséd him, till years he raught ;  
And all the discipline of justice there him taught.

There she him taught to weigh both right and wrong  
In equal balance with due recompense,  
And equity to measure out along  
According to the line of conscience,  
Whenso it needs with rigour to dispense :  
Of all the which, for want there of mankind,  
She causéd him to make experience  
Upon wild beasts, which she in woods did find,  
With wrongful power oppressing others of their kind.

Thus she him trainéd, and thus she him taught  
In all the skill of deeming wrong and right,  
Until the ripeness of man's years he raught ;  
That even wild beasts did fear his awful sight,  
And men admired his overruling might ;  
Ne any lived on ground that durst withstand  
His dreadful hest, much less him match in fight,  
Or bide the horror of his wreakful hand,  
Whenso he list in wrath lift up his steely brand :

The man who from childhood has been instructed in



the principles, and trained to the habit of rectitude, possesses a powerful weapon for the conflict of the world. Astræa in like manner armed her pupil, now arrived at manhood, with a weapon of marvellous temper and no less remarkable history,—the golden-hilted sword Chrysaor, the same with which Jupiter had overthrown the rebellious Titans, and which since that time had been laid up among the royal armoury in Jove's eternal house. Astræa, taking it thence by stealth, gave it to her pupil on parting, before sending him out into the world. The name "Chrysaor" was burnished in letters of gold upon the side of the blade, while the edge was formed of a mysterious compound of steel and diamond.

For of most perfect metal it was made,  
Tempered with adamant amongst the same,  
And garnished all with gold upon the blade  
In goodly wise, whereof it took his name,  
And was of no less virtue than of fame :  
For there no substance was so firm and hard,  
But it would pierce or cleave whereso it came ;  
Ne any armour could his dint out-ward ;  
But wheresoever it did light, it throughly sheared.

Having thus armed and instructed her pupil, and being wearied at length with the increased wickedness of men, Astræa returned to the heavens from which she came. There the "Virgin" may now nightly be seen, the sixth of those twelve glittering jewels which adorn the girdle of the heavens.

Now when the world with sin gan to abound,  
Astræa loathing longer here to space\*

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\**Space*, roam.

Mongst wicked men, in whom no truth she found,  
Returned to heaven, whence she derived her race;  
Where she hath now an everlasting place  
Mongst those twelve Signs, which nightly we do see  
The heaven's bright-shining baldrick\* to enchase;  
And is the VIRGIN, sixth in her degree,  
And next herself her righteous balance hanging be.

Astræa not only furnished Artegal with a sword,  
but left with him a stern and faithful attendant, the  
same who had accompanied her in her own wanderings  
through the world.

But when she parted hence she left her groom,  
An Iron Man, which did on her attend  
Always to execute her steadfast doom,  
And willéd him with Artegal to wend,  
And do whatever thing he did intend:  
His name was TALUS, made of iron mould,  
Immoveable, resistless, without end:  
Who in his hand an iron flail did hold,  
With which he threshed out falsehood, and did truth unfold.

TALUS will be easily recognised, as representing  
*retaliatory or retributive Justice*, the stern executor of  
the law's behests. He attends Artegal as closely as  
the Palmer attended Sir Guyon, only in a different  
capacity. He is the strong arm by which, in matters  
of right and wrong, the decisions of the understanding  
are carried into effect. Punitive or Vindictory  
Justice is often presented to the imagination as some-  
thing exceedingly forbidding and repulsive. But there  
is in Talus a sturdy, straightforward honesty of pur-  
pose, which wins imperceptibly upon the reader, not-  
withstanding the natural rigour of his character and

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\* *Baldrick*, belt, girdle, the Zodiac.

office. Even his iron flail, with which he threshes offenders, comes in for a share of our affection.

But it is time to begin the story. Suppose then, Artegal and Talus on their way in quest of the Tyrant *Grantorto*, whom they were to subdue. They had not proceeded far, when their attention was called to a Squire sitting by the wayside in great distress.

To whom as they approachéd, they espied  
A sorry sight as ever seen with eye,  
An headless Lady lying him beside  
In her own blood all wallowed wofully,  
That her gay clothes did in discolour dye.  
Much was he movéd at that rueful sight;  
And flamed with zeal of vengeance inwardly,  
He asked, who had that Dame so foully dight,  
Or whether his own hand, or whether other wight?

“ Ah! wo is me, and well away,” quoth he,  
Bursting forth tears like springs out of a bank,  
“ That ever I this dismal day did see!  
Full far was I from thinking such a prank;  
Yet little loss it were, and mickle thank,  
If I should grant that I have done the same,  
That I might drink the cup whereof she drank;  
But that I should die guilty of the blame,  
The which another did, who now is fled with shame.”

This Squire is not without a prototype. There have always been in the world men of upright conduct and fair intentions, but too feeble to cope successfully with the strong-handed villany which is abroad in society. The Squire's reply to Sir Artegal explains sufficiently the state of things.

“ Who was it, then,” said Artegal, “ that wrought?  
And why? Do it declare unto me true.”

“A Knight,” said he, “if Knight he may be thought,  
That did his hand in Lady’s blood imbrue,  
And for no cause, but as I shall you shew.  
This day as I in solace sat hereby  
With a fair Love, whose loss I now do rue,  
There came this Knight, having in company  
This luckless Lady which now here doth headless lie.

“He, whether mine seemed fairer in his eye,  
Or that he waxéd weary of his own,  
Would change with me; but I did it deny,  
So did the Ladies both, as may be known:  
But he, whose spirit was with pride upblown,  
Would not so rest contented with his right;  
But, having from his courser her down thrown,  
From me reft mine away by lawless might,  
And on his steed her set to bear her out of sight.

“Which when his Lady saw, she followed fast,  
And on him catching hold gan loud to cry,  
Not so to leave her nor away to cast,  
But rather of his hand besought to die:  
With that his sword he drew all wrathfully,  
And at one stroke cropped off her head with scorn,  
In that same place whereas it now doth lie.  
So he my Love away with him hath borne,  
And left me here both his and mine own Love to mourn.”

Thus it has been in all ages. Mere physical strength, unrestrained by conscience, becomes at once wilful and cruel, and needs the frequent interposition of avenging Justice.

Artegal, stopping to attend the Squire, sent forward his Iron Page in quest of the offender. Talus soon overtook Sangliere (that was the name of the wretch), and ordered him to halt. Sangliere, indignant at receiving such an order, told the Lady to dismount from behind him, and turning his steed, rushed upon the



uncivil groom with his whole force. His onset had about as much effect upon that iron man, as a pebble from the brook thrown against a granite boulder. One blow from that resistless flail lays the insolent oppressor sprawling in the dust. On waking from the shock, Sangliere finds himself in the iron grip of one with whom resistance is evidently unavailing.

Forced, therefore, to return and to confront the Squire whom he has wronged, and the Lady whom he has murdered, Sangliere boldly denies the whole story. He declares it to be a fiction throughout, invented by the feeble Squire to hide his own guilt; and offers to fight in single combat in proof of his assertion. Here, then, is a difficulty for which Talus alone is not sufficient. His office is merely executive, not judicial. Let us see whether Artegal has profited by the instructions of Astræa.

When to the place they came where Artegal  
By that same careful Squire did then abide,  
He gently gan him to demand of all  
That did betwixt him and that Squire betide:  
Who with stern countenance and indignant pride  
Did answer, that of all he guiltless stood,  
And his accuser thereupon defied;  
For neither he did shed that Lady's blood,  
Nor took away his Love, but his own proper good.

Well did the Squire perceive himself too weak  
To answer his defiance in the field,  
And rather chose his challenge off to break,  
Than to approve his right with spear and shield,  
And rather guilty chose himself to yield.  
But Artegal by signs perceiving plain  
That he it was not which that Lady killed,  
But that strange Knight, the fairer Love to gain,  
Did cast about by sleight the truth thereout to strain;

And said: "Now sure this doubtful cause's right  
Can hardly but by sacrament be tried,  
Or else by ordeal, or by bloody fight;  
That ill perhaps might fall to either side:  
But if ye please that I your cause decide,  
Perhaps I may all further quarrel end,  
So ye will swear my judgment to abide."  
Thereto they both did frankly condescend,  
And to his doom with listful ears did both attend.

"Since then," said he, "ye both the dead deny,  
And both the living Lady claim your right,  
Let both the dead and living equally  
Divided be betwixt you here in sight,  
And each of either take his share aright.  
But look, who does dissent from this my read,  
He for a twelve months' day shall in despite  
Bear for his penance that same Lady's head;  
To witness to the world that she by him is dead."

Well pleaséd with that doom was Sangliere,  
And offered straight the Lady to be slain:  
But that same Squire to whom she was more dear,  
Whenas he saw she should be cut in twain,  
Did yield she rather should with him remain  
Alive, than to himself be sharéd dead:  
And, rather than his Love should suffer pain,  
He chose with shame to bear that Lady's head:  
True love despiseth shame when life is called in dread.

Artegal's decision was like King Solomon's before him. The living lady was restored to the feeble Squire, and the cruel oppressor was obliged for a whole year to wear upon his arms, as a badge of shame, the bloody head of the lady whom he had murdered.

Whom when so willing Artegal perceived:  
"Not so, thou Squire," he said. "but thine I deem

The living Lady, which from thee he reaved :  
For worthy thou of her dost rightly seem.  
And you, Sir Knight, that love so light esteem,  
As that ye would for little leave the same,  
Take here your own that doth you best beseem,  
And with it bear the burden of defame ;  
Your own dead Lady's head, to tell abroad your shame."

But Sangliere disdainéd much his doom,  
And sternly gan repine at his behest ;  
Ne would for ought obey, as did become,  
To bear that Lady's head before his breast ;  
Until that Talus had his pride repressed,  
And forcéd him, maulgré,\* it up to rear.  
Who, when he saw it bootless to resist,  
He took it up, and thence with him did bear ;  
As rated spaniel takes his burden up for fear.

Much did that Squire Sir Artegal adore  
For his great justice held in high regard ;  
And as his Squire him offered evermore  
To serve, for want of other meet reward,  
And wend with him on his adventure hard :  
But he thereto would by no means consent ;  
But leaving him forth on his journey fared :  
Ne wight with him but only Talus went ;  
They two enough t' encounter an whole regiment.

Artegal and Talus would not be without employment in the nineteenth century. How numberless, how atrocious are the impositions every day practised ! How many persons are allowed to have their own way, not because they have the right on their side, but simply because they are stronger, or more unscrupulous, than their neighbours—because no conscience restrains them from enforcing their claims at the point of the pistol, the dirk, or the bowie knife !

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\* *Maulgré*, whether he would or not.

Nought is more honourable to a Knight,  
Ne better doth beseem brave Chivalry,  
Than to defend the feeble in their right,  
And wrong redress in such as wend awry :  
Whilom those great heroés got thereby  
Their greatest glory for their rightful deeds,  
And place deservéd with the gods on high :  
Herein the noblesse of this Knight exceeds,  
Who now to perils great for justice' sake proceeds.

Artegal and Talus resume their journey. They soon after meet with a dwarf. This was the favourite attendant of Florimel. From him they learn the recovery and the approaching spousals of that lady. Artegal is greatly rejoiced at the intelligence, says he will, if possible, be present at the nuptials, and asks when it is to take place.

“ Within three days,” quoth he, “ as I do hear,  
It will be at the Castle of the strand ;  
What time, if nought me let, I will be there  
To do her service so as I am bound.  
But in my way a little here beyond  
A curséd cruel Saracen doth won,  
That keeps a bridge's passage by strong hand,  
And many errant knights hath there fordone ;  
That makes all men for fear that passage for to shun.”

“ What mister wight,” quoth he, “ and how far hence,  
Is he, that doth to travellers such harms ?”  
“ He is,” said he, “ a man of great defence ;  
Expert in battle and in deeds of arms ;  
And more emboldened by the wickèd charms,  
With which his daughter doth him still support ;  
Having great lordships got and goodly farms  
Through strong oppression of his power extort ;  
By which he still them holds, and keeps with strong effort.



“ And daily he his wrongs increaseth more ;  
For never wight he lets to pass that way,  
Over his bridge, albe he rich or poor,  
But he him makes his passage-penny pay :  
Else he doth hold him back or beat away.  
Thereto he hath a Groom of evil guise,  
Whose scalp is bare, that bondage doth bewray,  
Which polls and pills the poor in piteous wise ;  
But he himself upon the rich doth tyrannize.

“ His name is hight Pollentè, rightly so,  
For that he is so puissant and strong,  
That with his power he all doth overgo,  
And makes them subject to his mighty wrong ;  
And some by slight he eke doth underfong :  
For on a bridge he custometh to fight,  
Which is but narrow, but exceeding long ;  
And in the same are many trap-falls pight,  
Through which the rider down doth fall through oversight.

“ And underneath the same a river flows,  
That is both swift and dangerous deep withal ;  
Into the which whomso he overthrows,  
All destitute of help doth headlong fall ;  
But he himself through practise usual  
Leaps forth into the flood, and there assays  
His foe confuséd through his sudden fall,  
That horse and man he equally dismays,  
And either both them drowns, or traitorously slays.

“ Then doth he take the spoil of them at will,  
And to his Daughter brings, that dwells thereby :  
Who all that comes doth take, and therewith fill  
The coffers of her wicked treasury ;  
Which she with wrongs hath heapéd up so high  
That many princes she in wealth exceeds,  
And purchased all the country lying nigh  
With the revénue of her plenteous meeds :  
Her name is Munera, agreeing with her deeds.

“ Thereto she is full fair, and rich attired,  
With golden hands and silver feet beside,  
That many lords have her to wife desired ;  
But she them all despiseth for great pride.”

Sangliere was a mere compound of wilfulness and cruelty, possessed of brute force. Pollente is a character somewhat different;—equally lawless, perhaps, but less impulsive; entirely unscrupulous as to means, but acting from design, and that design having reference not so much to blood as to money. The principle of the oppressor is in all ages the same. *Might makes right*. That is the doctrine. It may be written as effectually in ink by the extortionate money-lender, who exacts from an enfeebled creditor unrighteous interest, as it is in blood by the highway robber, who cuts your throat that he may help himself to your purse !

Artegal resolves of course to destroy Pollente, and break up his wicked custom of extorting money from travellers.

“ Now by my life,” said he, “ and God to guide,  
None other way will I this day betake,  
But by that bridge whereas he doth abide :  
Therefore me thither lead.” No more he spake,  
But thitherward forthright his ready way did make.

Unto the place he came within a while  
Where on the bridge he ready arméd saw  
The Saracen, awaiting for some spoil :  
Who as they to the passage gan to draw,  
A Villain to them came with skull all raw,  
That passage-money did of them require,  
According to the custom of their law :  
To whom he answered wroth, “ Lo there thy hire ;”  
And with that word him struck, that straight he did expire.

This Carl with the sore head seems to represent the little dirty ways by which men of property sometimes grind the face of the poor.

One who has gone through the adventures of the first four Books of the Fairy Queen, would suppose it impossible to devise anything new in the shape of knightly encounter. Let us see.

The Pagan, Pollente, seeing his man thus uncere- moniously dealt with, immediately addressed himself to fight. Artegal was not lacking. They advanced to meet upon the bridge. But just where they should have met, was the trap door mentioned by the Dwarf, and down they went into the current, horses and riders. Pollente and his horse were trained to it, and leaped advisedly. It was expected that Artegal, like hundreds of others before him, would fall head- long. Not so, however. The Dwarf had warned him of the danger, and he too leaped without losing his seat.

There being both together in the flood,  
They at each other tyrannously flew ;  
Ne ought the water cooléd their hot blood,  
But rather in them kindled choler new :  
But there the Paynim, who that use well knew  
To fight in water, great advantage had,  
That oftentimes him nigh he overthrew :  
And eke the courser whereupon he rad  
Could swim like to a fish whiles he his back bestrad.

Finding his horse not equal to that of Pollente in this new kind of combat, Artegal determined to close upon his foe. Seizing him, therefore, by his iron collar, he strove to drag him from his horse. Dread- ful was the turmoil which then ensued.

As when a Dolphin and a Seal are met  
In the wide champaign of the ocean plain,  
With cruel chafe their couragés they whet,  
The masterdom of each by force to gain,  
And dreadful battle twixt them do darrain;  
They snuff, they snort, they bounce, they rage, they roar,  
That all the sea, disturbéd with their train,  
Doth fry with foam above the surges hoar:  
Such was betwixt these two this troublesome uproar.

So Artegal at length him forced forsake  
His horse's back for dread of being drowned,  
And to his handy swimming him betake.  
Eftsoons himself he from his hold unbound,  
And then no odds at all in him he found;  
For Artegal in swimming skilful was,  
And durst the depth of any water sound.  
So ought each Knight, that use of peril has,  
In swimming be expert, through water's force to pass.

The contest seemed at one time doubtful. Both  
were expert swimmers, both skilful in the use of arms.  
But Artegal in the end began to prevail. Pollente,  
finding himself failing, made towards shore.

But Artegal pursued him still so near  
With bright Chrysaor in his cruel hand,  
That, as his head he gan a little rear  
Above the brink to tread upon the land,  
He smote it off, that tumbling on the strand  
It bit the earth for very fell despite,  
And gnashéd with his teeth, as if he banned  
High God, whose goodness he despairéd quite,  
Or cursed the hand which did that vengeance on him dight.

That done, unto the Castle he did wend,  
In which the Paynim's Daughter did abide,  
Guarded of many which did her defend:  
Of whom he entrance sought, but was denied,



And with reproachful blasphemy defied,  
Beaten with stones down from the battlement,  
That he was forcéd to withdraw aside ;  
And bade his servant Talus to invent  
Which way he enter might without endangerment.

Eftsoons his page drew to the Castle gate,  
And with his iron flail at it let fly,  
That all the warders it did sore amate,  
The which erewhile spake so reproachfully,  
And made them stoop, that lookéd erst so high.  
Yet still he beat and bounced upon the door,  
And thundered strokes thereon so hideously,  
That all the piece\* he shakéd from the floor,  
And filléd all the house with fear and great uproar.

With noise whereof the Lady forth appeared  
Upon the Castle wall ; and when she saw  
The dangerous state in which she stood, she feared  
The sad effect of her near overthrow ;  
And gan entreat that Iron Man below  
To cease his outrage, and him fair besought ;  
Since neither force of stones which they did throw,  
Nor power of charms, which she against him wrought,  
Might otherwise prevail, or make him cease for ought.

But, whenas she saw him yet to proceed  
Unmoved with prayers or with piteous thought,  
She meant him to corrupt with goodly meed ;  
And caused great sacks with endless riches fraught  
Unto the battlement to be upbrought,  
And pouréd forth over the Castle wall,  
That she might win some time, though dearly bought,  
Whilst he to gathering of the gold did fall ;  
But he was nothing moved nor tempted therewithal :

But still continued his assault the more,  
And laid on load with his huge iron flail,  
That at the length he has yrent the door,  
And made way for his Master to assail :

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\* Piece, castle.

Who being entered, nought did then avail  
For wight against his power themselves to rear :  
Each one did fly ; their hearts began to fail ;  
And hid themselves in corners here and there ;  
And eke their Dame half dead did hide herself for fear.

The scene which follows is one, the poetical propriety of which has been very much questioned. It may be in keeping with Talus. It is not what the gentle reader expects of Spenser. After some hesitation, I have concluded to give it.

After long search in the castle, the beautiful Munera was found by the inexorable Talus :

Long they her sought, yet nowhere could they find her,  
That sure they weened she was escaped away :  
But Talus, that could like a lime-hound wind her,  
And all things secret wisely could bewray,  
At length found out whereas she hidden lay  
Under an heap of gold : thence he her drew  
By the fair locks, and foully did array  
Withouten pity of her goodly hue,  
That Artegal himself her seamless plight did rue.

Yet for no pity would he change the course  
Of justice, which in Talus' hand did lie ;  
Who rudely haled her forth without remorse,  
Still holding up her suppliant hands on high,  
And kneeling at his feet submissively :  
But he her suppliant hands, those hands of gold,  
And eke her feet, those feet of silver try,\*  
Which sought unrighteousness, and justice sold,  
Chopped off, and nailed on high, that all might them  
behold.

Herself then took he by the slender waist  
In vain loud crying, and into the flood

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\* Try, tried.

Over the Castle wall adown her cast,  
And there her drownéd in the dirty mud :  
But the stream washed away her guilty blood.  
Thereafter all that mucky pelf he took,  
The spoil of people's evil-gotten good,  
The which her sire had scraped by hook and crook,  
And burning all to ashes poured it down the brook.

And lastly all that Castle quite he rased,  
Even from the sole of his foundation,  
And all the hewén stones thereof defaced,  
That there might be no hope of reparation,  
Nor memory thereof to any nation.  
All which when Talus throughly had performed,  
Sir Artegal undid the evil fashion,  
And wicked customs of that bridge reformed :  
Which done unto his former journey he returned.

This cruel execution of a beautiful woman for a crime against property, has in it something worse than mere bad taste. It was obviously intended to reconcile the public mind to the bloody scenes that had been enacted at Fotheringay Castle—to *justify Elizabeth before the world for the barbarities inflicted upon the beautiful Queen of Scots!*

To return to Artegal. He has now mastered and punished Sangliere and Pollente. Cruelty and extortion, however, are only two out of many modes of violating human rights. The adventure which next occurs will require perhaps some preface.

There are many things in society which we could wish otherwise. Property centered in the hands of a few, enormous private estates, monopolies, entails, primogenitures, hereditary, and exclusive political privileges,—how often do we hear people exclaiming against these as social evils requiring immediate re-

moval. Englishmen declaim against our domestic institutions, Americans declaim against the English factory system. Republicans are for dethroning tyrants, the monarchist longs to rid the earth of demagogues. Bonaparte wrested whole provinces from his neighbours, because any one by merely looking at the map can see that the Rhine is the natural boundary of France. There is always abroad in the world a disposition to political quackery, arranging the affairs of nations and societies according to certain preconceived notions of what *ought to be*, instead of carefully taking cognisance of what *is*—laying plans for the government of human affairs, as if the actors in the scene were merely the pawns of the chess-board, or as if the institutions of society were to be constructed anew, without reference to established laws or vested rights. Such I take to be the spirit of the very remarkable adventure which follows.

While travelling abroad, they came one day to the sea-shore. There upon a plain, they saw an immense concourse of people, listening with eager credulity to the speculations of the philosopher whom I now introduce.

There they beheld a mighty Giant stand  
Upon a rock, and holding forth on high  
An huge great pair of balance in his hand,  
With which he boasted in his surquedry,\*  
That all the world he would weigh equally,  
If ought he had the same to counterpoise:  
For want whereof he weighéd vanity,  
And filled his balance full of idle toys:  
Yet was admiréd much of fools, women, and boys.

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\* *Surquedry*, pride.



He said that he would all the earth uptake  
And all the sea, divided each from either :  
So would he of the fire one balance make,  
And one of th' air, without or wind or weather :  
Then would he balance heaven and hell together,  
And all that did within them all contain ;  
Of all whose weight he would not miss a feather :  
And look what surplus did of each remain,  
He would to his own part restore the same again.

For why, he said, they all unequal were,  
And had encroachéd upon others' share ;  
Like as the sea (which plain he showed there)  
Had worn the earth ; so did the fire the air ;  
So all the rest did others' parts impair :  
And so were realms and nations run awry.  
All which he undertook for to repair,  
In sort as they were forméd anciently ;  
And all things would reduce unto equality.

Therefore the vulgar did about him flock,  
And cluster thick unto his leasings vain ;  
Like foolish flies about an honey-crock ;  
In hope by him great benefit to gain,  
And uncontrolléd freedom to obtain.  
All which when Artegal did see and hear,  
How he misled the simple people's train,  
In 'sdainful wise he drew unto him near,  
And thus unto him spake without regard or fear.

Artegal argues the matter with the Giant, and charges him with presumption in thus undertaking to set all things right, and saying so positively how things should, or should not be. Artegal furthermore thinks, that mere change is always perilous, and exhorts the innovator to beware how he turns things to chaos, lest he may not be able to reduce them again to order.

“Thou that presumest to weigh the world anew,  
And all things to an equal to restore,  
Instead of right meseems great wrong dost shew,  
And far above thy force’s pitch to soar:  
For, ere thou limit what is less or more  
In everything, thou oughtest first to know  
What was the poise of every part of yore:  
And look then, how much it doth overflow  
Or fail thereof, so much is more than just to trow.

“For at the first they all created were  
In goodly measure by their Maker’s might;  
And weighéd out in balances so near,  
That not a dram was missing of their right:  
The earth was in the middle centre pight,  
In which it doth immovable abide,  
Hemmed in with waters like a wall in sight,  
And they with air, that not a drop can slide:  
All which the heavens contain, and in their courses guide.

“Such heavenly justice doth among them reign,  
That every one do know their certain bound;  
In which they do these many years remain,  
And mongst them all no change hath yet been found:  
But if thou now shouldst weigh them new in pound,  
We are not sure they would so long remain:  
All change is perilous, and all chance unsound.  
Therefore leave off to weigh them all again,  
Till we may be assured they shall their course retain.”

“Thou foolish elf,” said then the Giant wroth,  
“Seest not how badly all things present be,  
And each estate quite out of order go’th?  
The sea itself dost thou not plainly see  
Encroach upon the land there under thee?  
And th’ earth itself how daily it’s increased  
By all that dying to it turned be?  
Were it not good that wrong were then surceased,  
And from the most that some were given to the least?

“Therefore I will throw down these mountains high,  
And make them level with the lowly plain,  
These towering rocks, which reach unto the sky,  
I will thrust down into the deepest main,  
And, as they were, them equalize again.  
Tyrants, that make men subject to their law,  
I will suppress, that they no more may reign;  
And lordlings curb that commons overawe;  
And all the wealth of rich men to the poor will draw.”

Artegal again argues the matter at considerable length.

“Of things unseen how canst thou deem aright,”  
Then answeréd the righteous Artegal,  
“Since thou misdeemst so much of things in sight?  
What though the sea with waves continual  
Do eat the earth, it is no more at all;  
Ne is the earth the less, or loseth ought:  
For whatsoever from one place doth fall  
Is with the tide unto another brought:  
For there is nothing lost, that may be found if sought.

“Likewise the earth is not augmented more  
By all that dying into it do fade;  
For of the earth they forméd were of yore:  
However gay their blossom or their blade  
Do flourish now, they into dust shall vade.\*  
What wrong then is it, if that when they die,  
They turn to that whereof they first were made?  
All in the power of their great Maker lie:  
All creatures must obey the voice of the Most High.

“They live, they die, like as He doth ordain,  
Ne never any asketh reason why.  
The hills do not the lowly dales disdain;  
The dales do not the lofty hills envy.  
He maketh kings to sit in sovereignty;

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\* *Vade* (Lat. *vado*), go.

He maketh subjects to their power obey ;  
 He pulleth down, He setteth up on high ;  
 He gives to this, from that He takes away :  
 For all we have is His : what He list do, He may.

“ Whatever thing is done, by Him is done,  
 Ne any may His mighty will withstand ;  
 Ne any may His sovereign power shun,  
 Ne loose that He hath bound with steadfast band :  
 In vain therefore dost thou now take in hand  
 To call to count, or weigh His works anew,  
 Whose counsel's depth thou canst not understand ;  
 Since of things subject to thy daily view  
 Thou dost not know the causes nor their courses due.”

To put the proud boaster's scales to the test,  
 Artegal proposes various practical problems.

“ For take thy balance, if thou be so wise,  
 And weigh the wind that under heaven doth blow ;  
 Or weigh the light that in the east doth rise ;  
 Or weigh the thought that from man's mind doth flow .  
 But if the weight of these thou canst not show,  
 Weigh but one word which from thy lips doth fall :  
 For how canst thou those greater secrets know,  
 That dost not know the least thing of them all ?  
 Ill can he rule the great that cannot reach the small.”

Therewith the Giant much abashed said  
 That he of little things made reckoning light ;  
 Yet the least word that ever could be laid  
 Within his balance he could weigh aright.  
 “ Which is,” said he, “ more heavy then in weight,  
 The right or wrong, the false or else the true ?”  
 He answered that he would try it straight :  
 So he the words into his balance threw ;  
 But straight the winged words out of his balance flew.

Wroth waxed he then, and said that words were light,  
 Ne would within his balance well abide :



But he could justly weigh the wrong or right.  
"Well then," said Artegal, "let it be tried :  
First in one balance set the true aside."  
He did so first, and then the false he laid  
In th' other scale ; but still it down did slide,  
And by no means could in the weight be stayed :  
For by no means the false will with the truth be weighed.

"Now take the right likewise," said Artegal,  
"And counterpoise the same with so much wrong."  
So first the right he put into one scale ;  
And then the Giant strove with puissance strong  
To fill the other scale with so much wrong :  
But all the wrongs that he therein could lay  
Might not it poise ; yet did he labour long,  
And sweat, and chafed, and provéd every way :  
Yet all the wrongs could not a little right down weigh.

Which when he saw, he greatly grew in rage,  
And almost would his balances have broken :  
But Artegal him fairly gan assuage,  
And said, "Be not upon thy balance wroken ;\*  
For they do nought but right or wrong betoken ;  
But in the mind the doom of right must be :  
And so likewise of words, the which be spoken,  
The ear must be the balance, to decree  
And judge, whether with truth or falsehood they agree.

"But set the truth and set the right aside,  
For they with wrong or falsehood will not fare,  
And put two wrongs together to be tried,  
Or else two falses, of each equal share,  
And then together do them both compare :  
For truth is one, and right is ever one."  
So did he ; and then plain it did appear,  
Whether of them the greater were at one :  
But right sat in the middést of the beam alone.

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\* *Wroken*, wreaked, avenged.

But he the right from thence did thrust away ;  
For it was not the right which he did seek ;  
But rather strove extremities to weigh,  
Th' one to diminish, th' other for to eke :  
For of the mean he greatly did misleek.†

So impotent is your political visionary in regard to any real, practical question of right or wrong, weal or woe.

Our friend Talus, seeing by this time the drift of Sir Artegal's argument, and apprehending at length the impudent assumption of the Giant, drew near and deliberately thrust the boaster over the precipice into the sea.

Whom when so lewdly minded Talus found,  
Approaching nigh unto him cheek by cheek,  
He shouldered him from off the higher ground,  
And down the rock him throwing, in the sea him drowned.

Like as a ship, whom cruel tempest drives  
Upon a rock with horrible dismay,  
Her shattered ribs in thousand pieces rives,  
And spoiling all her gears and goodly ray,  
Does make herself misfortune's piteous prey,  
So down the cliff the wretched Giant tumbled ;  
His battered balances in pieces lay,  
His timbered bones all broken rudely rumbled :  
So was the high-aspiring with huge ruin humbled.

That when the people, which had there about  
Long waited, saw his sudden desolation,  
They gan to gather in tumultuous rout,  
And mutining to stir up civil faction  
For certain loss of so great expectation :  
For well they hopéd to have got great good,  
And wondrous riches by his innovation :

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\* *Misleek*, dislike.

Therefore resolving to revenge his blood  
They rose in arms, and all in battle order stood.

Which lawless multitude him coming to  
In warlike wise when Artegal did view,  
He much was troubled, ne wist what to do :  
For loth he was his noble hands t' embrue  
In the base blood of such a rascal crew ;  
And otherwise, if that he should retire,  
He feared least they with shame would him pursue :  
Therefore he Talus to them sent t' inquire  
The cause of their array, and truce for to desire.

But soon as they nigh him approaching spied,  
They gan with all their weapons him assay,  
And rudely struck at him on every side ;  
Yet nought they could him hurt, ne ought dismay :  
But when at them he with his flail gan lay,  
He like a swarm of flies them overthrew :  
Ne any of them durst come in his way,  
But here and there before his presence flew,  
And hid themselves in holes and bushes from his view.

The festive hall and the gay assembly, no less than the field of battle and of civil turmoil, furnish occasion for the display of equity. Man has his rights even in a ball-room. To withhold or invade the rights growing out of the laws of etiquette, interferes often quite as seriously with the happiness of another as a violation of the rights of property or of person. Wounded pride is more difficult to bear than a wounded head, and a curl of the lip may give greater pain than a blow from the sabre. A man may be honest in business, prompt in the redress of public grievances, an upright judge, a fearless magistrate, a brave soldier, and yet in the interchange of the minor offices of life, may be indifferent to the principle which has for its object, in all circumstances, *to give to each its own.*

If, therefore, I have succeeded in making the reader at all interested in Sir Artegal and Talus, he will not be unwilling to follow them to the scene of their next adventure. There is an additional reason why we shall take pleasure in accompanying them. The festival which they are about to attend, is no other than the nuptials of the sweet Florimel.

We left this lady at the close of the last Book, just at the moment of her final and happy deliverance by Marinel.

After long storms and tempests over-blown  
The sun at length his joyous face doth clear :  
So whenas fortune all her spite hath shown,  
Some blissful hours at last must needs appear ;  
Else should afflicted wights oft-times despair.  
So comes it now to Florimel by turn,  
After long sorrows sufferéd whilere,  
In which captived she many months did mourn  
To taste of joy, and to wont pleasures to return :

Who being freed from Proteus' cruel band  
By Marinel, was unto him affied,  
And by him brought again to Fairy Land ;  
Where he her spoused, and made his joyous bride.  
The time and place was blazéd far and wide,  
And solemn feasts and joasts ordained therefor :  
To which they did resort from every side  
Of Lords and Ladies infinite great store ;  
Ne any Knight was absent that brave courage bore.

To tell the glory of the feast that day,  
The goodly service, the deviceful sights,  
The bridegroom's state, the bride's most rich array,  
The pride of Ladies, and the worth of Knights,  
The royal banquets, and the rare delights,  
Were work fit for an herald, not for me :  
But for so much as to my lot here lights,



That with this present treatise doth agree,  
True virtue to advance, shall here recounted be.

After the feasting and entertainment of various kinds, Sir Marinel and six brave Knights with him, held a gay tournament in honour of the bride, like that held by Sir Satyrane in the previous Book. The outline of the tourneying will be found in the following stanzas :

When all men had with full satiety  
Of meats and drinks their appetites sufficed,  
To deeds of arms and proofs of chivalry  
They gan themselves address, full rich aguised,  
As each one had his furnitures devised.  
And first of all issued Sir Marinel,  
And with him six Knights more, which enterprised  
To challenge all in right of Florimel,  
And to maintain that she all others did excel.

The first of them was hight Sir Orimont,  
A noble Knight, and tried in hard assays :  
The second had to name Sir Belisont,  
But second unto none in prowess' praise :  
The third was Brunel, famous in his days :  
The fourth Ecastor, of exceeding might :  
The fifth Armeddan, skilled in lovely lays :  
The sixth was Lansac, a redoubted Knight :  
All six well seen in arms, and proved in many a fight.

And them against came all that list to joust,  
From every coast and country under sun :  
None was debarred, but all had leave that lust.  
The trumpets sound ; then all together run.  
Full many deeds of arms that day were done ;  
And many Knights unhorsed, and many wounded,  
As fortune fell ; yet little lost or won :  
But all that day the greatest praise redounded  
To Marinel, whose name the heralds loud resounded.

The second day, so soon as morrow light  
 Appeared in heaven, into the field they came,  
 And there all day continued cruel fight,  
 With diverse fortune fit for such a game,  
 In which all strove with peril to win fame;  
 Yet whether side was victor n'ote be guessed:  
 But at the last the trumpets did proclaim  
 That Marinel that day deserved best.  
 So they departed were, and all men went to rest.

The third day came, that should due trial lend  
 Of all the rest; and then this warlike crew  
 Together met, of all to make an end.  
 There Marinel great deeds of arms did shew;  
 And through the thickest like a lion flew,  
 Rashing off helms, and riving plates asunder;  
 That every one his danger did eschew:  
 So terribly his dreadful strokes did thunder,  
 That all men stood amazed, and at his might did wonder.

But what on earth can always happy stand?  
 The greater prowess greater perils find.  
 So far he passed amongst his enemies' band,  
 That they have him enclosed so behind,  
 As by no means he can himself outwind:  
 And now perforce they have him prisoner taken;  
 And now they do with captive bands him bind;  
 And now they lead him hence, of all forsaken,  
 Unless some succour had in time him overtaken.

There is one prominent character in the Fairy Queen, which I have contrived in a great measure to dodge. It seems necessary, however, to the explication of the story at this point, to bring him forward, and for this purpose to make a few words of explanation. Braggadochio is an impudent braggart, like Jack Falstaff, in everything but his wit. He appears in one of the earliest scenes in the poem, where he

*steals* the horse and spear of Sir Guyon. At the tournament of Sir Satyrane, by a singular chance, the Snowy Florimel was awarded to him. He appears frequently and experiences a variety of adventures. The full development of his character would require a long series of extracts. I believe, however, I have stated all the circumstances necessary to understand what is about to follow.

On the occasion of the present tournament, Braggadochio came among others, bringing with him the Snowy Florimel. Sir Artegal, hearing in the tilt-yard the ill luck which had just befallen Sir Marinel, resolved to rescue him; and to make his civility the more graceful, determined to conceal his name. For this purpose he borrowed privately the shield of Braggadochio, whom he had met incidentally a little before, and whose real character he did not know.

It fortun'd, whilst they were thus ill beset,  
Sir Artegal into the tilt-yard came,  
With Braggadochio, whom he lately met  
Upon the way with that his Snowy Dame;  
Where, when he understood by common fame  
What evil hap to Marinel betid,  
He much was moved at so unworthy shame,  
And straight that Boaster pray'd, with whom he rid,  
To change his shield with him, to be the better hid.

Thus equipped, Artegal entered the lists, and after much hard fighting succeeded in rescuing Marinel. The third day closed, the trumpets sounded, Marinel and the stranger Knight are proclaimed masters of the field, and the bride, in whose honour they tilted, is adjudged to be the most beautiful of Dames.

All the gay concourse repair to the Hall, where in

open sight the beauteous bride, fair Florimel, appears to greet with smiles and thanks the brave Knights who had tilted in her behalf, and especially to bestow the garland upon the stranger Knight who had behaved so gallantly, and had been so regardful of the feelings both of the bride and groom. But Artegal, having achieved the rescue, had contrived to slip away among the crowd, and restore the borrowed shield to Braggadochio, who kept himself, as usual, at a very discreet distance from the actual conflict.

Which when he had performed, then back again  
To Braggadochio did his shield restore :  
Who all this while behind him did remain,  
Keeping there close with him in precious store  
That his false Ladie, as ye heard afore.

The trumpets sounded, the bride holds up the garland, but no one comes forward to claim it. Knowing that it had been won by his *shield* at least, if not by his *arm*, Braggadochio boldly steps forward.

But, reader, you shall see this remarkable scene.

Then did the trumpets sound, and judges rose,  
And all these Knights, which that day armour bore,  
Came to the open hall to listen whose  
The honour of the prize should be adjudged by those.

And thither also came in open sight  
Fair Florimel into the common hall,  
To greet his guerdon unto every Knight,  
And best to him to whom the best should fall.  
Then for that stranger Knight they loud did call,  
To whom that day they should the garland yield ;  
Who came not forth : but for Sir Artegal  
Came Braggadochio, and did show his shield,  
Which bore the sun broad blazéd in a golden field.



The sight whereof did all with gladness fill :  
So unto him they did addeem the prize  
Of all that triumph. Then the trumpets shrill  
Don Braggadochio's name resounded thrice :  
So courage lent a cloak to cowardice :  
And then to him came fairest Florimel,  
And goodly gan to greet his brave emprise,  
And thousand thanks him yield, that had so well  
Approved that day that she all others did excel.

To whom the Boaster, that all Knights did blot,  
With proud disdain did scornful answer make,  
That what he did that day, he did it not  
For her, but for his own dear Lady's sake,  
Whom on his peril he did undertake  
Both her and eke all others to excel :  
And further did uncomely speeches crack.  
Much did his words the gentle Lady quell,  
And turned aside for shame to hear what he did tell.

Then forth he brought his Snowy Florimel,  
Whom Trompart had in keeping there beside,  
Covered from people's gazement with a veil :  
Whom when discovered they had throughly eyed,  
With great amazement they were stupefied ;  
And said, that surely Florimel it was,  
Or if it were not Florimel so tried,  
That Florimel herself she then did pass.  
A feeble skill of perfect things the vulgar has.

Which whenas Marinel beheld likewise,  
He was therewith exceedingly dismayed ;  
Ne wist he what to think, or to devise :  
But, like as one whom fiends had made afraid,  
He long astonished stood, ne ought he said,  
Ne ought he did, but with fast fixed eyes  
He gazed still upon that Snowy Maid ;  
Whom ever as he did the more avise,  
The more to be true Florimel he did surmise.

All which when Artegal, who all this while  
 Stood in the press close covered, well had viewed,  
 And saw that Boaster's pride and graceless guile,  
 He could no longer bear, but forth issued,  
 And unto all himself there open shewed,  
 And to the Boaster said : "Thou losel base,  
 That hast with borrowed plumes thyself endued,  
 And others' worth with leasings dost deface,  
 When they are all restored thou shalt rest in disgrace.

"That shield, which thou dost bear, was it indeed  
 Which this day's honour saved to Marinel :  
 But not that arm, nor thou the man I read,  
 Which didst that service unto Florimel :  
 For proof shew forth thy sword, and let it tell  
 What strokes, what dreadful stour, it stirred this day :  
 Or show the wounds which unto thee befell ;  
 Or show the sweat with which thou diddest sway  
 So sharp a battle, that so many did dismay.

"But this the sword that wrought those cruel stounds,  
 And this the arm the which that shield did bear,  
 And these the signs," (so showed forth his wounds,)  
 "By which that glory gotten doth appear.  
 As for this Lady, which he sheweth here,  
 Is not (I wager) Florimel at all ;  
 But some fair franion,\* fit for such a fere,†  
 That by misfortune in his hand did fall."  
 For proof whereof he bade them Florimel forth call.

So forth the noble Lady was ybrought,  
 Adorned with honour and all comely grace :  
 Whereto her bashful shamefastness ywrought  
 A great increase in her fair blushing face ;  
 As roses did with lilies interlace :  
 For of those words, the which that Boaster threw,  
 She inly yet conceived great disgrace :  
 Whom whenas all the people such did view,  
 They shouted loud, and signs of gladness all did shew.

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\* *Franion*, lewd woman.

† *Fere*, companion.

Then did he set her by that snowy one,  
Like the true saint beside the image set;  
Of both their beauties to make paragon  
And trial, whether should the honour get.  
Straightway, so soon as both together met,  
Th' Enchanted Damsel vanished into nought:  
Her snowy substance melted as with heat,  
Ne of that goodly hue remainéd ought,  
But th' empty Girdle which about her waist was wrought.

*As when the daughter of Thaumantes\* fair  
Hath in a watery cloud displayed wide  
Her goodly bow, which paints the liquid air;  
That all men wonder at her colour's pride;  
All suddenly, ere one can look aside,  
The glorious picture vanisheth away,  
Ne any token doth thereof abide:  
So did this Lady's goodly form decay,  
And into nothing go, ere one could it bewray.*

Braggadochio, chagrined at his exposure and at the wonderful disappearance of his Snowy Florimel, was about to withdraw from the scene. He meets with a new interruption. Among the other Knights who honoured the nuptials of Florimel, was our old friend Sir Guyon. His attention being particularly called to the braggart Knight, by the events just described, behold his own good steed, Brigadore, which he had not seen this many a month. Sir Guyon immediately claims the horse. Braggadochio refuses to give him up. Sir Guyon challenges the thief to combat. Braggadochio declines. Great is the tumult and the "hurlyburly" throughout the hall. Again Sir Artegal interposes to the settlement of the difficulty and the adjustment of their rights. He was satisfied,

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\* Daughter of Thaumantes, Iris, the rainbow.

indeed, of the true state of the case from what he had already seen. But he has learned to avoid, not only evil, but the appearance of evil. Having obtained silence, therefore, he asked Sir Guyon to state the facts relative to the disappearance of the horse.

Who all that piteous story, which befell  
About that woful Couple which were slain,  
And their young Bloody Babe to him gan tell;  
With whom whiles he did in the wood remain,  
His horse purloinéd was by subtle train;  
For which he challengéd the Thief to fight:  
But he for nought could him thereto constrain;  
For as the death he hated such despite,  
And rather had to lose than try in arms his right.

Which Artegal well hearing (though no more  
By law of arms there need one's right to try,  
As was the wont of warlike Knights of yore,  
Than that his foe should him the field deny),  
Yet further right by tokens to descry,  
He asked, what privy tokens he did bear.  
"If that," said Guyon, "may you satisfy,  
Within his mouth a black spot doth appear,  
Shaped like a horse's shoe, who list to seek it there."

Whereof to make due trial one did take  
The horse in hand within his mouth to look:  
But with his heels so sorely he him struck,  
That all his ribs he quite in pieces broke,  
That never word from that day forth he spoke.  
Another, that would seem to have more wit,  
Him by the bright embroidered headstall took:  
But by the shoulder him so sore he bit,  
That he him maiméd quite, and all his shoulder split.

Ne he his mouth would open unto wight,  
Until that Guyon's self unto him spake,  
And calléd "Brigadore" (so was he hight),  
Whose voice so soon as he did undertake,



Eftsoons he stood as still as any stake,  
And suffered all his secret mark to see ;  
And, whenas he him named, for joy he brake  
His bands, and followed him with gladful glee,  
And frisked, and flung aloft, and louted low on knee.

Braggadocchio, however, made a great ado, and reviled Sir Artegal with terms of reproach. Artegal merely hands the braggart over to Talus,—him with the iron flail !

Talus by the back the boaster hent,  
And drawing him out of the open hall,  
Upon him did inflict this punishment :  
First he his beard did shave, and foully shent ;  
Then from him reft his shield, and it reversed,  
And blotted out his arms with falsehood blent ;  
And himself baffled, and his arms unheard ;  
And broke his sword in twain, and all his armour spersed.

Relieved thus of these base intruders by the discreet intervention of Artegal, the gay company continued, in that good old Hall, many days to make merry and rejoice—not the least joyous in the company being the beautiful bride, the honoured, the loved, the happy FLORIMEL.

Some of the most difficult and perplexing cases of equity in regard to the rights of property, are those which grow out of the marriage relation. A part at least of the difficulty in the adventure which next ensues, is to be traced to this fruitful source both of weal and woe.

Artegal was not indisposed to enjoy the gay festivities of the Court of Florimel. But he had been sent on a grave and important mission, which must be

accomplished before he could return to make Britomart his bride. Bidding adieu, therefore, to the company, Artegal and Talus proceed on their journey. When next seen by the reader, they are travelling by the sea-shore. They are interrupted in their progress by falling in with a company, consisting of two brothers, Amidas and Brasidas, and their two ladies, Philtera and Lucy. The two brothers are fighting, as if in mortal combat, over a *chest*, which lies on the ground between them. Artegal stops the fight, and inquires of them the reason of their contention. Brasidas, the elder, thereupon gives the following story.

Their father was the owner of the two beautiful islands in sight. These islands were originally equal in size and value. On dying, he left one island to each son. The island left to Brasidas, the elder, was gradually washed by the sea, and the earth thus washed from his island was borne by the tide and deposited upon the bank of the other island opposite. By this means the island of the elder brother continually decreased, while that of the younger brother continually increased in size, until the one became a mere speck in the ocean, the other an ample domain. There were also two maidens, Philtera, a rich heiress, espoused to the elder brother, and Lucy, a maiden with no dowry, save the noble endowment of virtue. She was espoused to the younger brother. Increasing wealth and elevation in rank not unfrequently, and not always for the better, change our views in regard to the conjugal union. The now wealthy younger brother despised and deserted the simple maiden who once was esteemed suited to make him happy; while the heiress, despising a lover whose diminished acres

seemed no longer capable of maintaining a suitable rank, left him and eloped with his more fortunate brother. The simple-minded Lucy, deserted and disconsolate, threw herself into the sea. In her struggles with the waves, she seized accidentally a chest which was floating by. Seceding from her rash resolution of self-destruction, she availed herself of the floating chest to reach again the land, and was carried to the shore of the unfortunate elder brother. The elder brother receives her graciously. Common sufferings, mutual wants, and accordant dispositions, are not long in producing their natural results. The unfortunate but sympathizing couple become affianced. On examining the chest, which was thrown up with Lucy, it was found to contain valuable treasures sufficient to make them both wealthy. This is the chest over which the two brothers are fighting. The younger brother asserts that the chest and its treasure had belonged to his bride, the heiress, having been lost overboard during her voyage; and he now claims it in her name. Such is the claim set up by the younger brother. The elder brother, however, refuses to give it up.

Though my land he first did win away,  
And then my love (though now it little skill),  
Yet my *good luck* [the chest and Lucy] he shall not  
likewise prey,  
But I will it defend whilst ever that I may.

They both, however, agree to leave the matter to the decision of Sir Artegal.

Then Artegal thus to the younger said:  
“Now tell me, Amidas, if that ye may,

Your brother's land the which the sea hath laid  
Unto your part, and plucked from his away,  
By what good right do you withhold this day?"

"What other right," quoth he, "should you esteem,  
But that the sea it to my share did lay?"

"Your right is good," said he, "and so I deem,  
That what the sea unto you sent your own should seem."

Then turning to the elder thus he said:

"Now, Brasidas, let this likewise be shown;  
Your brother's treasure, which from him is strayed,  
Being the dowry of his wife well known,  
By what right do you claim to be your own?"

"What other right," quoth he, "should you esteem,  
But that the sea hath it unto me thrown?"

"Your right is good," said he, "and so I deem,  
That what the sea unto you sent your own should seem.

"Forequal right in equal things doth stand:  
For what the mighty sea hath once possessed,  
And plucked quite from all possessors' hand,  
Whether by rage of waves that never rest,  
Or else by wreck that wretches hath distressed,  
He may dispose by his imperial might,  
As thing at random left, to whom he list.

So, Amidas, the land was yours first hight;  
And so the treasure yours is, Brasidas, by right."

Perhaps the most difficult species of injustice for a man to resist or redress, is where the aggressor is a woman. His feeling of veneration for the sex comes into direct conflict with his sense of justice. The struggle which ensues, in such a case, is neither light nor imaginary. There are, it may be, few who are called upon to encounter this difficulty in the precise form in which it met Sir Artegal. At the same time, I believe, there are among men equally few who have not been obliged to encounter the difficulty in some



shape. What this difficulty is, may be defined more precisely after narrating the exploits which next ensue. The woman who will be the principal actor in those exploits, will attract no small share of attention, and will call for the exercise, on the part of the reader, of some little power of discrimination. She is indeed a riddle, but not without a meaning, nor without a representative in modern society.

Artegal and Talus, proceeding on their journey, spied far off a vast rout of people, whom on a near approach they perceived to be women in armour.

And in the midst of them he saw a Knight,  
With both his hands behind him pinioned hard,  
And round about his neck an halter tight,  
And ready for the gallow tree prepared:  
His face was covered, and his head was bared,  
That who he was uneath was to desery;  
And with full heavy heart with them he fared,  
Grieved to the soul, and groaning inwardly,  
That he of Women's hands so base a death should die.

These merciless executioners, rejoicing over the fate of their victim, and insulting his misfortune, were interrupted in their proceedings by Artegal, who suspected foul play, and determined to make a rescue. Thereupon he found himself instantly beset with a countless swarm of foes, who seemed to think their busy hands would soon demolish the stranger Knight.

But he was soon aware of their ill mind,  
And drawing back deceived their intent:  
Yet, though himself did shame on womankind  
His mighty hand to shend, he Talus sent  
To wreck on them their folly's hardiment:  
Who with few souces of his iron flail  
Dispersed all their troupe incontinent,

And sent them home to tell a piteous tale  
Of their vain prowess turned to their proper bale.

Having thus cleared the ground, they released the prisoner, and on uncovering his face, found him to be Sir Turpin, a Knight well known to Artegal. Sir Turpin told his story, of which I will quote the pith.

“ Being desirous (as all Knights are wont)  
Through hard adventure deeds of arms to try,  
And after fame and honour for to hunt,  
I heard report that far abroad did fly,  
That a proud Amazon did late defy  
All the brave Knights that hold of Maidenhead,  
And unto them wrought all the villany  
That she could forge in her malicious head,  
Which some hath put to shame, and many done be dead.

“ The cause, they say, of this her cruel hate,  
Is for the sake of Bellodant the bold,  
To whom she bore most fervent love of late,  
And wooéd him by all the ways she could :  
But, when she saw at last that he ne would  
For ought or nought be won unto her will,  
She turned her love to hatred manifold,  
And for his sake vowed to do all the ill  
Which she could do to Knights ; which now she doth fulfil.

“ For all those Knights, the which by force or guile  
She doth subdue, she foully doth entreat :  
First, she doth them of warlike arms despoil,  
And clothe in women’s weeds ; and then with threat  
Doth them compel to work, to earn their meat,  
To spin, to card, to sew, to wash, to wring ;  
Ne doth she give them other thing to eat  
But bread and water or like feeble thing ;  
Them to disable from revenge adventuring.

“ But if through stout disdain of manly mind  
Any her proud observance will withstand,

Upon that gibbet, which is there behind,  
She causeth them be hanged up out of hand;  
In which condition I right now did stand:  
For, being overcome by her in fight,  
And put to that base service of her band,  
I rather chose to die in life's despite,  
Than lead that shameful life, unworthy of a Knight."

This fierce Amazon is the woman whose character the reader is to solve. Her name is RADIGUND. She has some points in common with Britomart, if it be permitted to say that a woman so bad as Radigund, is like a woman so good as she of the "heben spear." There is in both a fearless self-reliance, a force and earnestness of character, a masculine energy of purpose, an entire ability to join in the rude encounter of life, of which there are few examples in any age or either sex.

But likeness is not identity. The points of difference between Britomart and Radigund are far greater than the points of similarity. Especially do they differ in the governing motive by which their energy is directed. The object of Britomart is to protect herself—to maintain her own independence, and that of her sex. Radigund's object is the contemptible ambition of lording it over the other sex. The effect of this difference in the governing motive, shows itself in their whole characters. The one is a being refined, pure, serene. The other becomes coarse, turbulent, and base. The virgin snow just fallen upon the frosty ground, might be the emblem of the one. The emblem of the other would be that same snow in a thaw, sullied with the warm breath of the south wind,—unsightly and unsafe. Britomart's energy is that of a

deep, rapid stream fed by springs ;—so clear is its current, you can hardly believe in its rapidity and its force, till you attempt to resist its progress. Radigund is a mountain torrent, swelled by heavy rains ;—violent and resistless, but turbid and devastating. Each of these women finds herself, unexpectedly, vulnerable. But this discovery in the case of Britomart leads to the development of the crowning virtue of her character, a noble affection for Artegal, which is equally worthy of its object and its subject, of him and of her. Radigund's wound, on the contrary, becomes a festering sore, irritating and unclean.

I have spoken of Radigund as coarse. Let not the expression be misinterpreted. It is moral, not physical coarseness, that is intended. She is represented as having youth, beauty, elegance of manners and appearance, and whatever else is necessary to make her a gentlewoman—except gentleness of purpose. Hers is a coarseness, not of brawn and bone, not even of intellect, but of heart—a vulgar thirst for revenge, and a paltry love of rule, not compatible with her true dignity as a woman.

Radigund represents a class of characters, rather than any single character. I know not that I can point to any one entire correlative in modern society. Some of her features may be seen in the miserable jilt, who trifles with the most serious interests this side of the grave, for the paltriest of all possible gratifications. A still more striking development of Radigund in modern society, may be seen in the domestic tyrant, whose aim is to govern her husband,—who, in common parlance, loves to “wear the”—garment which I suppose must not be named.



But it is time to put an end to dissertation and proceed with the story.

Artegal had no sooner heard of this daring Amazon, than he determined to attack her and put an end to her impositions. Turpin consents to be the guide to her town, and to accompany him in the expedition. The watchmen on the wall report to those within, the approach of a Knight with two attendants, evidently coming with hostile intent. Great is the bustle which ensues. Myriads of female warriors, like swarms of bees whose hive has been disturbed, crowd together in the streets and market-places. The gates are barred and the entrance blocked up. But Radigund, confident in numbers, as well as in herself, and thinking scorn to be dependent on bolt and bar for safety against so few, ordered the gate to be opened, and to let the intruders advance, if they saw fit.

Soon as the gates were open to them set,  
They presséd forward, entrance to have made :  
But in the middle way they were ymet  
With a sharp shower of arrows, which them stayed,  
And better had advise, ere they essayed  
Unknowén peril of bold Women's pride.  
Then all that rout upon them rudely laid,  
And heapéd strokes so fast on every side,  
And arrows hailed so thick, that they could not abide.

But Radigund herself, when she espied  
Sir Turpin, from her direful doom acquit,  
So cruel dole amongst her Maids divide,  
T' avenge that shame they did on him commit,  
All suddenly inflamed with furious fit,  
Like a fell lioness at him she flew,  
And on his head-piece him so fiercely smit,  
That to the ground him quite she overthrew,  
Dismayed so with the stroke that he no colours knew.

Soon as she saw him on the ground to grovel,  
She lightly to him leapt; and, in his neck  
Her proud foot setting, at his head did level,  
Weening at once her wrath on him to wreak,  
And his contempt that did her judgment break:  
*As when a bear hath seized her cruel claws  
Upon the carcass of some beast to wreak,  
Proudly stands over, and awhile doth pause  
To hear the piteous beast pleading her plaintive cause.*

As she thus pauses with uplifted weapon to drink in the sweet luxury of conscious triumph before dealing the deadly blow, she receives herself a sudden blow from Artegal which sends her reeling towards the ground. Instantly, swarming myriads of warlike maids interpose between Artegal and Radigund, and prevent their coming into close combat. There is another of our party, however, who has plenty of occupation.

And every while that mighty Iron Man  
With his strange weapon, never wont in war,  
Them sorely vexed, and coursed, and overran,  
And broke their bows, and did their shooting mar,  
That none of all the many once did dare  
Him to assault, nor once approach him nigh,  
But like a sort of sheep disperséd far,  
For dread of their devouring enemy,  
Through all the fields and valleys did before him fly.

Night comes on at length, and Radigund sounds a retreat. She and her troops retire within the walls. Artegal pitches his pavilion on the plain outside. Talus keeps guard at the tent door.

Great was the agitation that night inside of the town. Never before had the fierce Amazon received so bold a rebuff. Raging with vexation, she deter-

mined at length to challenge the stranger Knight on the following day to single combat. At dead of night, therefore, the trusty maid, Clarinda, was summoned to the presence chamber, and made the bearer of the following message.

“Go, Damsel, quickly do thyself address  
To do the message which I shall express :  
Go thou unto that stranger Fairy Knight,  
Who yesterday drove us to such distress ;  
Tell, that to-morrow I with him will fight,  
And try in equal field whether hath greater might.

“But these conditions do to him propound ;  
That, if I vanquish him, he shall obey  
My law, and ever to my lore be bound ;  
And so will I, if me he vanquish may ;  
Whatever he shall like to do or say :  
Go straight, and take with thee to witness it,  
Six of thy fellows of the best array,  
And bear with you both wine and juncats fit,  
And bid him eat : henceforth he oft shall hungry sit.”

Let us omit the formalities which ensued, and the busy note of preparation the next morning, and proceed at once to the combat.

So forth she came out of the city gate,  
With stately port and proud magnificence,  
Guarded with many Damsels that did wait  
Upon her person for her sure defence,  
Playing on shaums and trumpets, that from hence  
Their sound did reach unto the heaven's height :  
So forth into the field she marchéd thence,  
Where was a rich pavilion ready pight\*  
Her to receive, till time they should begin the fight.

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\* *Pight*, pitched.

Then forth came Artegal out of his tent,  
All armed to point, and first the lists did enter :  
Soon after eke came she with full intent  
And countenance fierce, as having fully bent her  
That battle's utmost trial to adventure.  
The lists were closéd fast, to bar the rout  
From rudely pressing on the middle centre ;  
Which in great heaps them circled all about,  
Waiting how fortune would resolve that dangerous doubt.

The trumpets sounded, and the field began ;  
With bitter strokes it both began and ended.  
She at the first encounter on him ran  
With furious rage, as if she had intended  
Out of his breast the very heart have rended :  
But he, that had like tempests often tried,  
From that first flaw himself right well defended.  
The more she raged, the more he did abide ;  
She hewed, she foined, she lashed, she laid on every side.

Artegal, who was wary as well as brave, acted for some time on the defensive. When, from the violence of her assault, her strength began to fail, he returned her blows with interest. Finding her skilful at warding off his blows, he tried the temper of her shield, and sheared off the full half of it by one successful hit with his good sword Chrysaor. Not long after, by a similar manœuvre, he pared away the other half, leaving her without protection. A third blow full upon her helmet, brought her senseless to the ground. But you must see this.

Having her thus disarméd of her shield,  
Upon her helmet he again her strook,  
That down she fell upon the grassy field  
In senseless swoon, as if her life forsook,  
And pangs of death her spirit overtook :



Whom when he saw before his feet prostrated,  
 He to her leaped with deadly dreadful look,  
 And her sunshiny helmet soon unlaced,  
 Thinking at once both head and helmet to have rased.

But, whenas he discovered had her face,  
 He saw (his senses' strange astonishment),  
 A miracle of nature's goodly grace  
 In her fair visage void of ornament,  
 But bathed in blood and sweat together ment ;\*  
 Which, in the rudeness of that evil plight,  
 Bewrayed the signs of feature excellent :  
 Like as the moon, in foggy winter's night,  
 Doth seem to be herself, though darkened be her light.

At sight thereof his cruel minded heart  
 Empiercéd was with pitiful regard,  
 That his sharp sword he threw from him apart,  
 Cursing his hand that had that visage marred :  
*No hand so cruel, nor no heart so hard*  
*But ruth of Beauty will it mollify.*

Did I not say there would be difficulty? Artegal has appeared to us thus far the very mirror of uncompromising justice; and justice demands the punishment of a cruel and wicked offender. But he is a MAN, *and he cannot strike a woman*. He bears not the flail of Talus, but a sword whose temper is as ethereal as his own. He cannot, he does not use it, to mar the beauty of those delicate features. He dashes away the ruthless weapon, as though it had been guilty of a crime, and gazes with equal wonder, pity, and remorse, on that beautiful face.

The moment is critical. Radigund, recovering from her swoon, which was merely temporary, sees the Knight unarmed, and off his guard. Unexpectedly,

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\* *Ment*, mingled.

springing from the ground, and renewing the attack, she wins an easy victory, and compels the Knight to surrender at discretion.

As for the rest of our party, on the surrender of Artegal, Turpin is seized and the barbarous punishment from which he had been rescued is carried into execution. He is hanged. The third gentleman may speak for himself—

But, when they thought on Talus hands to lay,  
He with his iron flail amongst them thundered,  
That they were fain to let him scape away,  
Glad from his company to be so sundered ;  
Whose presence all their troops so much encumbered,  
That th' heaps of those which he did wound and slay,  
Besides the rest dismayed, might not be numbered :  
Yet all that while he would not once assay  
To rescue his own Lord, but thought it just t' obey.

Talus was prevented from interfering to rescue Artegal by the principles which they both professed. Artegal had accepted most improper terms in commencing the combat. He had no right to engage as he did, in case of his not succeeding, to become her thrall. Still, having made so inconsiderate a promise, and having surrendered at discretion in open field, he felt bound by the law of honour not to avail himself of the flail of Talus, but to submit in good faith to the conditions, which, however harsh and unrighteous, he had yet voluntarily accepted. He is not the only man who, from a sense of honour, and rather than break an imprudent engagement into which he had been inveigled, has compromised his own peace and happiness, because the party to whom his word is pledged, is a woman !

Radigund, causing Artegal to be stripped of all his armour, clad him in woman's weeds, covering the front of his person, not with a cuirass, but an ignoble "apron white." Thus clad, she took him into a long hall, hung around on all sides with the shields of Knights whom she had similarly conquered.

There entered in he round about him saw  
Many brave Knights whose names right well he knew,  
There bound t' obey that Amazon's proud law,  
Spinning and carding all in comely row,  
That his big heart loathed so uncomely view:  
But they were forced through penury and pine,  
To do those works to them appointed due:  
For nought was given them to sup or dine,  
But what their hands could earn by twisting linen twine.

Amongst them all she placéd him most low,  
And in his hand a distaff to him gave,  
That he thereon should spin both flax and tow;  
A sordid office for a mind so brave:  
*So hard it is to be a Woman's slave!*  
Yet he it took in his own self's despite,  
And thereto did himself right well behave  
Her to obey, since he his faith had plight  
Her vassal to become, if she him won in fight.

Such is the cruelty of womenkind,  
When they have shaken off the shamefast band,  
With which wise nature did them strongly bind  
T' obey the hests of man's well-ruling hand,  
That then all rule and reason they withstand  
To purchase a licentious liberty:  
But virtuous women wisely understand,  
That they were born to base humility,  
Unless the heavens them lift to lawful sovereignty.

Thus there long while continued Artegal,  
Serving proud Radigund with true subjection:

However it his noble heart did gall  
T' obey a Woman's tyrannous direction,  
That might have had of life or death election :  
But, having chosen, now he might not change.

I said that Radigund, like Britomart, unexpectedly found herself not invulnerable. Here then the plot thickens. The most menial offices become ennobling, when performed from noble motives. There is something striking in Sir Artegal's nice sense of honour, in these extraordinary circumstances. The reader will not be surprised, therefore, at finding the Amazon beginning to entertain a secret liking to the strange Knight, on whom she is inflicting these indignities. Much as she may try to conceal it from herself, Radigund is in love with Artegal.

But concealing the tender passion, is only to hide a fire by covering it with a cloak or other combustible material. Not only does the fire eat its way out, but its heat becomes intense in proportion to the amount of combustibles in which it has been enveloped. Unable at length any longer either to conceal or control her passion, Radigund summoned to her aid the trusty Clarinda, and committed to her the delicate task of love-making.

The plan was this. Clarinda was gradually to win the Knight's confidence, and then to suggest to him in such way as circumstances might open, the idea of aspiring to the hand and heart of his proud victor. Nothing in his position would warrant such an idea. It would seem like madness. And yet, to be successful, the idea must seem to arise from himself, or to grow in some way out of his circumstances. Such a suggestion coming from her, even indirectly, would



not only be exceedingly mortifying to her pride, but be likely to defeat its own end. *No woman must seem to make advances.* Hence the difficulty. How can Artegal, plying his distaff amongst the herd of other drudges, be induced to think of such a thing, to think it possible, and to venture upon it? It can only be by suggestions, springing up apparently incidentally in the course of confidential conversation about various other topics. It requires, therefore, the interposition of a third party, entrusted with the secret, and with a plenipotentiary commission. And who so trusty, who so supple, who so discreet, as the well-tried maid, Clarinda? To Clarinda, therefore, a full confession is made, and the signet ring is given, which would put at her command every ward and bolt in the Castle. Directions are added, not to spare any means necessary to the accomplishment of the object, which was to secure for her mistress the affections of Artegal. Her commission ends with these words :

“ Say and do all that may thereto prevail ;  
Leave nought unpromised that may him persuade,  
Life, freedom, grace, and gifts of great avail,  
With which the gods themselves are milder made :  
Thereto add art, even women’s witty trade,  
The art of mighty words that men can charm ;  
With which in case thou canst him not invade,  
Let him feel hardness of thy heavy arm :  
Who will not stoop with good shall be made stoop with  
harm.

“ Some of his diet do from him withdraw ;  
For I him find to be too proudly fed :  
Give him more labour, and with straighter law,  
That he with work may be forweariéd :  
Let him lodge hard, and lie in strawen bed,

That may pull down the courage of his pride ;  
And lay upon him, for his greater dread,  
Cold iron chains with which let him be tied ;  
And let, whatever he desires, be him denied.

Love-agencies are proverbially unsafe. These confidential interviews and secret conversations, require certainly more discretion than most people have to boast of ; and in nine cases of ten, ere either party is aware of it, the agent is found speaking one word for his principal, and two for himself. I do not mean to say that Artegal fell in love with the maid instead of the mistress. On the contrary, I affirm, he maintained the most unimpeachable indifference to both. But Clarin, poor Clarin, ere their first conversation was over, was herself the greatest obstacle to the success of her mission. Hence a still farther complication of this already tangled web. Every relaxation in the rigour of his servitude, every addition to his comfort, is made to appear to Artegal to emanate from Clarinda. On the other hand, to every inquiry of Radigund, respecting the effect of the treatment, the mind of the prisoner is represented as proud and unbending.

Therefore unto her Mistress most unkind  
She daily told, her love he did defy :  
And him she told, her Dame his freedom did deny :  
Yet thus much friendship she to him did show,  
That his scarce diet somewhat was amended,  
And his work lessened, that his love might grow :  
Yet to her Dame him still she discommended,  
That she with him might be the more offended.  
Thus he long while in thralldom there remained,  
Of both belovéd well, but little friended ;  
Until——

But in this position of affairs we shall have to leave

the parties for some time, and direct our attention to others.

When Artegal and Britomart separated, after their recognition and affiance, three months was fixed as the time necessary for the accomplishment of his exploit. That time was now past, and yet he did not return, nor was there any news of him. It is not without some degree of curiosity that we inquire what will be the conduct of the Warrior Maid under these circumstances. Britomart, if we have read her aright, holds a middle place in the scale of character, between Belphœbe and Amoret—eagle-eyed, energetic, and self-relying, and yet a real true-hearted woman;—the oak and the ivy combined in one person;—a being tremblingly alive to the most transient and zephyr-like emotions, and yet firmly rooted and grounded in principle.

Sometime she fearéd lest some hard mishap  
Had him misfallen in his adventurous quest:  
Sometime lest his false foe did him entrap  
In traitorous train, or had unwares oppressed;  
But most she did her troubled mind molest,  
And secretly afflict with jealous fear,  
Lest some new Love had him from her possessed,  
Yet loath she was, since she no ill did hear,  
To think of him so ill; yet could she not forbear.

One while she blamed herself; another while  
She him condemned as trustless and untrue:  
And then, her grief with error to beguile,  
She feigned to count the time again anew,  
As if before she had not counted true:  
For days, but hours; for months that passéd were,  
She told but weeks, to make them seem more few:

Yet, when she reckoned them still drawing near,  
Each hour did seem a month, and every month a year.

But, whenas yet she saw him not return,  
She thought to send some one to seek him out;  
But none she found so fit to serve that turn,  
As her own self, to ease herself of doubt.  
Now she devised, amongst the warlike rout  
Of errant Knights, to seek her errant Knight;  
And then again resolved to hunt him out  
Amongst loose Ladies lappéd in delight:  
And then both Knights envied, and Ladies eke did spite.

One day the restless Maid stood by the open window, looking towards the west (for it was in that direction Artegal had gone), "sending forth her winged thoughts more swift than wind, to bear unto her love the message of her mind." Behold at last some one approaching in the distance. As he becomes more distinctly visible, her eager eye recognises him. It is the Iron Man. It is Talus. Why comes he alone? Why in such haste? What news does he bring? How her heart beats! She cannot await his arrival, but runs to meet him.

Even in the door him meeting, she begun:  
"And where is he thy Lord, and how far hence?  
Declare at once: and hath he lost or won?"  
The Iron Man, albe he wanted sense  
And sorrow's feeling, yet, with conscience  
Of his ill news, did inly chill and quake,  
And stood still mute, as one in great suspense;  
As if that by his silence he would make  
Her rather read his meaning than himself it speak.

Till she again thus said: "Talus, be bold,  
And tell whatever it be, good or bad,



That from thy tongue thy heart's intent doth hold."  
 To whom he thus at length: "The tidings sad,  
 That I would hide, will needs I see be read.  
 My Lord (your Love) by hard mishap doth lie  
 In wretched bondage, wofully bestead."

"Ah me," quoth she, "what wicked destiny!  
 And is he vanquished by his tyrant enemy?"

"Not by that Tyrant, his intended foe;  
 But by a *Tyranness*," he then replied,  
 "That him captivéd hath in hapless wo."  
 "Cease, thou bad newsman; badly dost thou hide  
 Thy Master's shame, in harlot's bondage tied;  
 The rest myself too readily can spell."  
 With that in rage she turned from him aside,  
 Forcing in vain the rest to her to tell;  
 And to her chamber went like solitary cell.

There she began to make her mournful plaint  
 Against her Knight for being so untrue;  
 And him to touch with falsehood's foul attaint,  
 That all his other honour overthrew.  
 Oft did she blame herself, and often rue,  
 For yielding to a stranger's love so light,  
 Whose life and manners strange she never knew;  
 And evermore she did him sharply twit  
 For breach of faith to her, which he had firmly plight.

And then she in her wrathful will did cast  
 How to revenge that blot of honour blent  
 To fight with him, and goodly die her last:  
 And then again she did herself torment,  
 Inflicting on herself his punishment.  
 Awhile she walked and chafed; awhile she threw  
 Herself upon her bed, and did lament:  
 Yet did she not lament with loud alew,\*  
 As women wont, but with deep sighs and singulfs† few.

Recovering somewhat from the first burst of grief,

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\* *Alew* (Gr. αλαλη), howling, lamentation. † *Singulfs* (Lat. singultus), sobs.

Britomart returns to Talus to inquire more into the particulars of her supposed disgrace.

I have shown you the Ivy, shattered by the blast and yet clinging to its fastenings. Look now at the Oak, breasting the storm. How her eye kindles, how her frame dilates, how her heart beats, as the Iron Man proceeds with his narrative, and the truth flashes upon her, that Artegal is *only* unfortunate. *That* admits of remedy. She does not stop to answer. She scarcely waits for Talus to finish his story. Instantly, she dons her armour, mounts her steed, and bids the Iron Man lead the way.

Behold then Britomart and Talus, journeying to the rescue of Artegal. Towards night they met an aged man, Dolon (guile) by name, who invited them to spend the night at his house. The scene at Dolon's hut, is in some respects the counterpart of that in the Hermitage of Archimago. The murder of sleeping travellers has in all ages of the world been but too common a form of injustice. It is not necessary to give the whole of the occurrences at the hut of Dolon. Let me just lift the veil on two scenes, and leave the rest to the reader's imagination. First, see Britomart, after she has retired to her chamber.

There all that night remainéd Britomart,  
Restless, recomfortless, with heart deep-grieved,  
Not suffering the least twinkling sleep to start  
Into her eye, which th' heart might have relieved;  
But if the least appeared, her eyes she straight reprieved.\*

"Ye guilty eyes," said she, "the which with guile  
My heart at first betrayed, will ye betray

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\* *Reprieved*, reproved.

My life now too, for which a little while  
 Ye will not watch? false watches, wellaway!  
 I wot when ye did watch both night and day  
 Unto your loss; and now needs will ye sleep?  
 Now ye have made my heart to wake alway,  
 Now will ye sleep? ah! wake, and rather weep  
 To think of your night's want, that should ye waking keep."

Thus did she watch, and wear the weary night  
 In wailful plaints, that none was to appease;  
 Now walking soft, now sitting still upright,  
 As sundry change her seeméd best to ease.  
 Ne less did Talus suffer sleep to seize  
 His eyelids sad, but watch continually,  
 Lying without her door in great disease;  
 Like to a spaniel waiting carefully  
 Lest any should betray his Lady treacherously.

Let us now lift the veil upon this same chamber a  
 few hours later.

What time the native belman of the night,  
 The bird that warnéd Peter of his fall,  
 First rings his silver bell t' each sleepy wight,  
 That should their minds up to devotion call,  
 She heard a wondrous noise below the hall:  
 All suddenly the bed, where she should lie,  
 By a false trap was let adown to fall  
 Into a lower room, and by and by  
 The loft was raised again, that no man could it spy.

With sight whereof she was dismayed right sore,  
 Perceiying well the treason which was meant:  
 Yet stirré not at all for doubt of more,  
 But kept her place with courage confident,  
 Waiting what would ensue of that event.  
 It was not long before she heard the sound  
 Of arméd men coming with close intent  
 Towards her chamber; at which dreadful stound  
 She quickly caught her sword, and shield about her bound.

With that there came unto her chamber door,  
Two Knights all arméd ready for to fight;  
And after them full many other more,  
A rascal rout, with weapons rudely dight:  
Whom soon as Talus spied by glimpse of night,  
He started up, there where on ground he lay,  
And in his hand his thresher ready keight.\*  
They, seeing that, let drive at him straightway,  
And round about him press in riotous array.

But, as soon as he began to lay about  
With his rude iron flail, they gan to fly,  
Both arméd Knights and eke unarméd rout:  
Yet Talus after them apace did ply,  
Wherever in the dark he could them spy;  
That here and there like scattered sheep they lay.  
Then back returning where his Dame did lie,  
He to her told the story of that fray,  
And all that treason there intended did bewray.

The following day, Britomart came to the temple of Isis. In Egyptian mythology, Osiris represents Justice, while his wife Isis is the symbol of Equity, a modification or branch of the former. Spenser displays a new species of lore in the Canto which follows, unveiling the mysterious symbols of the religion of the Nile. There is a stern, cold grandeur in the Egyptian mythos, well suited to the serious and truthful character of Britomart. We must, however, pass over the description of this temple and of the Goddess. Britomart, admitted to the shrine, prostrated herself upon the naked ground (for that is the only floor to the temple of Isis), and offered her humble, silent prayer. It was now night. Mysterious indications were given that her prayer was accepted. The relief of mind

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\* *Keight*, caught.



which this afforded, the fatigue of her journey, the loss of sleep the previous night, produced their natural effect upon her frame.

There did the warlike Maid herself repose,  
Under the wing of Isis all that night ;  
And with sweet rest her heavy eyes did close,  
After that long day's toil and weary plight :  
Where whilst her earthly parts with soft delight  
Of senseless sleep did deeply drownéd lie,  
There did appear unto her heavenly sprite  
A wondrous vision, which did close imply  
The course of all her fortune and posterity.

Omitting this vision and the other occurrences at the temple of Isis, let us proceed with Britomart and Talus to the city of Radigund.

It is not doing justice to Britomart to omit her battle with the Amazon. The reader, however, has already seen too much of her prowess, and knows too well the justice of her cause, to doubt of the result. A stanza or two will be sufficient to show the spirit with which these two female Knights entered upon the contest.

*“ When Greek meets Greek ”——?*

The trumpets sound, and they together run  
With greedy rage, and with their faulchions smote ;  
Ne either sought the other's strokes to shun,  
But through great fury both their skill forgot,  
And practick use in arms ; ne sparéd not  
Their dainty parts, which nature had created  
So fair and tender without stain or spot  
For other uses than they them translated ;  
Which they now hacked and hewed as if such use they hated.

As when a tiger and a lioness  
Are met at spoiling of some hungry prey,

Both challenge it with equal greediness :  
But first the tiger claws thereon did lay ;  
And therefore, loath to loose her right away,  
Doth in defence thereof full stoutly stand :  
To which the lion strongly doth gainsay,  
That she to hunt the beast first took in hand ;  
And therefore ought it have wherever she it found.

The Tiger may rage and rend, but still the Lion is lord of the forest ; and so it proved on this occasion. The fierce proud Radigund is slain. The city is then captured, the prison broken open, and Britomart and Artegal are once more happy in each other's confidence and company.

The reader may suppose perhaps that the felicity thus dearly won, is not again to be disturbed. But Artegal's adventures thus far are merely preparatory. He undertook a special mission, the release of the Lady Irena from the cruelties of Grantorto, in other words, the establishment of peace and righteousness by the overthrow of unrighteousness and oppression. This task is not accomplished until the close of the twelfth Canto. We have now only just finished the seventh.

Artegal was indeed under a temptation of no ordinary kind. Few, even in the days of Fairydom, would have hesitated to forego the final achievement, and to take the cup of happiness now placed within reach.

Nought under heaven so strongly doth allure  
The sense of man, and all his mind possess,  
As Beauty's lovely bait, that doth procure  
Great warriors oft their rigour to repress,  
And mighty hands forget their manliness ;

Drawn with the power of an heart-robbing eye,  
 And wrapped in fetters of a golden tress,  
 That can with melting pleasance mollify  
 Their hardened hearts enured to blood and cruelty.

So whilom learned that mighty Jewish swain,  
 Each of whose locks did match a man in might,  
 To lay his spoils before his Leman's train :  
 So also did that great Oetean Knight  
 For his Love's sake his lion's skin undight ;  
 And so did warlike Antony neglect  
 The world's whole rule for Cleopatra's sight.  
 Such wondrous power hath women's fair aspect  
 To captive men, and make them all the world reject.

But Spenser's heroes are men of duty, not of pleasure. Artegal would have been unworthy of the noble Britomart, had he even for her sake shrunk from the path of duty and peril. *No woman whose love is worth possessing, will love her husband the less for being true to the principles of his manhood.*

"Man was made  
 To rule the storm, not languish in the shade :  
 ACTION's his sphere."

He has something to *do* in this stirring world. So at least thought Artegal ; and he resisted successfully the most powerful temptation which a virtuous man is ever called upon to encounter—the temptation, I mean, to abandon known duty and the requirements of his station, for the heavenly solace of lawful and wedded love.

Yet could it not stern Artegal retain,  
 Nor hold from suit of his avowed quest,  
 Which he had underta'en to Gloriane ;  
 But left his Love (albe her strong request)  
 Fair Britomart in languor and unrest,

And rode himself upon his first intent :  
Ne day nor night did ever idly rest ;  
Ne wight but only Talus with him went,  
The true guide of his way and virtuous government.

If we were called upon to say what one idea was uppermost in the English mind at the time Spenser wrote the *Fairy Queen*, the answer would most likely be, "the Spanish Armada." There is hardly an instance, in authentic history, in which a whole nation seems to have been so completely possessed with one predominant and engrossing idea. The nation was roused by the apprehension of this invasion, not only as it threatened the subversion of their political independence, but as it endangered their newly acquired religious liberties. It was regarded as a contest, not merely between Englishmen and Spaniards, but between Protestants and Catholics. Elizabeth, equally from principle and policy, ever strove to make herself distinctly known as a Protestant Princess. Nothing, therefore, could be more natural than for Spenser to conceive of Philip as an unrighteous and cruel Sultan; and the Church by whom, according to the English theory, he was influenced to commit these cruelties, as an unprincipled and unrelenting Sultana,—a woman who exercised absolute sway over her husband and his kingdom, and who controlled the energies of both in the execution of her wicked designs. The crimes against humanity and public faith, committed by this bad woman, through the agency of her proud and powerful consort, required correction at the hands of Justice.

Such I take to be the meaning of the incidents



which occupy the eighth Canto of the Legend of Artegall. At the same time, the allegory is more veiled than is Spenser's wont. It may be, that the author intended, while thus giving expression to his feelings as an Englishman and a loyal subject of Queen Elizabeth, at the same time to draw his pictures in such general terms, as should make them applicable to men of all ages and all nations. And surely, there is no age or nation, where bad faith, and cruelty in the exercise of national power, are not likely to bring national punishment and misfortune.

Whether, therefore, we take the eighth Canto in a special or a general sense, we will find it one full of meaning; and, laying all allegory aside, and regarding the Canto as a mere tale, we will find it full of interest, and in a very high degree poetical.

Artegall and Talus saw a damsel flying upon a palfrey, pursued by two Knights. These Knights themselves were pursued by a third Knight, who seemed straining to overtake and arrest them, before the commission of the bloody deed on which they were evidently bent. At length the third or hindermost Knight was seen to gain on the other two, so far at least as to compel one of them to stop his pursuit and address himself to self-defence. The other Knight, however, continued to press the pursuit, and seemed likely to gain his cruel end. But the flying damsel, seeing Artegall crossing the plain, changed her course, and made directly towards him, evidently with the design to throw herself on him for protection. Artegall thereupon put spear in rest, and placed himself full in front of the approaching Knight. Cruelty never rages so fiercely as when balked of its victim at the

very moment of expected success. The stranger Knight slackened not his course, but directing his spear towards Artegal, rushed forward with all the violence of physical momentum goaded by madness. Terrible, terrible was the shock. But Artegal was a firm rider. If he had been once unseated, it was by an "enchanted spear." He now maintained his firm seat, while the wicked foeman was carried by the force of the encounter full two spears' length behind his horse. Nor was that the best. The wretch in his fall came accidentally with his head downwards, broke his neck, and instantly expired.

A similar issue resulted to the contest on the other side of the plain. Both of the murderous Knights in short were slain at the same moment, and lay upon the ground. The surviving Knights were Artegal and this other hindmost Knight, whoever he may be, who was first seen trying to arrest the pursuit. But Artegal and the strange Knight having each been exclusively engaged with his own adventure, did not see of course what took place on the part of the plain distant from himself. Each, therefore, on looking up, made a serious mistake. Artegal supposed the Knight now coming towards him to be the other marauder. The stranger Knight made a similar mistake in regard to Artegal. Behold then another shock of encountering Knights, if possible, more tremendous than the first. The strange Knight sits as firmly as Artegal. Neither is unhorsed, but the spears of both are shivered like reeds. They draw their swords, and are about to engage in close conflict. But the Lady sees the terrible mistake, rushes between and explains—and so we may breathe more freely.

But who is this strange Knight? His visor is now lowered. Look upon him. I will not describe his features, nor tell you just now his name. But Artegal, the moment he saw the nobleness, the delicate and almost girlish fairness of that princely visage, felt his heart knit to him at once, as was that of David to Jonathan. He approached the youthful and majestic stranger, with a warm affection not unmixed with reverence. Neither had ever before seen the other. But the deed in which each was seen engaged, was the best and truest card of introduction. The courtesies which were interchanged, the kindly greetings, and the vows of amity and perpetual friendship which ensued, were such as might be expected from the noble Artegal and the PRINCELY ARTHUR.

They next turned to the Lady, to whom and to whose cause they were equally strangers, and inquired who she was, and why she had been thus cruelly pursued. In hearing her story, you will not forget the historical allusions already given.

“Then wot ye well, that I  
Do serve a Queen that not far hence doth won,  
A Princess of great power and majesty.  
Famous through all the world, and honoured far and nigh.

“Her name Mercilla most men use to call  
That is a Maiden Queen of high renown,  
For her great bounty known over all  
And sovereign grace, with which her royal crown  
She doth support, and strongly beateth down  
The malice of her foes, which her envy  
And at her happiness do fret and frown:  
Yet she herself the more doth magnify,  
And even to her foes her mercies multiply.

"Mongst many which malign her happy state,  
 There is a mighty man, which wons hereby,  
 That with most fell despite and deadly hate  
 Seeks to subvert her crown and dignity,  
 And all his power doth thereunto apply :  
 And her good Knights (of which so brave a band  
 Serves her as any Princess under sky),  
 He either spoils, if they against him stand,  
 Or to his part allures, and bribeth under hand.

"Ne him sufficeth all the wrong and ill,  
 Which he unto her people does each day ;  
 But that he seeks by traitorous trains to spill  
 Her person, and her sacred self to slay :  
 That, O ye Heavens, defend ! and turn away  
 From her unto the miscreant himself ;  
 That neither hath religion nor fay,\*  
 But makes his God of his ungodly pelf,  
 And Idols serves : so let his Idols serve the Elf !

"To all which cruel tyranny, they say,  
 He is provoked, and stirred up day and night  
 By his bad wife that hight Adicia ;  
 Who counsels him, through confidence of might,  
 To break all bonds of law and rules of right :  
 For she herself professeth mortal foe  
 To Justice, and against her still doth fight,  
 Working, to all that love her, deadly wo,  
 And making all her Knights and people to do so."

From what follows, Spenser would seem to assert that Elizabeth, before engaging in sanguinary war with the Spanish Monarch, tried first the effect of negotiation—and commenced the negotiation by an embassy not to Philip, but to Philip's master, THE CHURCH—that the embassy, so far from securing its desired effect, had not even secured to its agents the protec-

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\* *Fay*, faith.



tion accorded among all civilized nations to diplomatic agents. A public ambassador, or a messenger with a flag of truce, or an offer of peace, has in all ages been held sacred. There is therefore nice poetical propriety in Mercilla's sending a Lady instead of a Knight to treat with Adicia. The sanctity of person accorded to woman by the common consent of all mankind, is a fit emblem of the personal security guarantied to the public negotiator. *Wo worth the wretch who shall lay violent hands on either.* But let us proceed with the Lady's story.

“Which my liege Lady seeing, thought it best  
With that his wife in friendly wise to deal,  
For stint of strife and stablishment of rest  
Both to herself and to her common-weal,  
And all forepast displeasures to repeal.  
So me in message unto her she sent,  
To treat with her, by way of interdeal,  
Of final peace and fair atonement  
Which might concluded be by mutual consent.

“All times have wont safe passage to afford  
To Messengers that come for causes just:  
But this proud Dame, disdainning all accord,  
Not only into bitter terms forth burst,  
Reviling me and railing as she lust,  
But lastly, to make proof of utmost shame,  
Me like a dog she out of doors did thrust,  
Miscalling me by many a bitter name,  
That never did her ill, ne once deservéd blame.

“And lastly, that no shame might wanting be,  
When I was gone, soon after me she sent  
These two false Knights, whom there ye lying see,  
To be by them dishonouréd and shent:  
But, thanked be God, and your good hardiment!  
They have the price of their own folly paid.”

Artegal and Arthur resolved to inflict exemplary punishment upon the Soudan and his wicked wife. They found it necessary, to the accomplishment of this undertaking, to resort to stratagem. Artegal therefore arrayed himself in the armour of one of the dead pagan Knights, and taking with him the Lady, Samient, went to the city of the Soudan.

Where soon as his proud wife of her had sight,  
Forth of her window as she looking lay,  
She weened straight it was her Paynim Knight,  
Which brought that Damsel as his purchased prey;  
And sent to him a Page that might direct his way:  
Who, bringing them to their appointed place,  
Offered his service to disarm the Knight;  
But he refusing him to let unlace,  
For doubt to be discovered by his sight,  
Kept himself still in his strange armour dight.

Artegal being thus without suspicion admitted within the palace to act as occasion might require, behold Prince Arthur arrives outside the walls, and sends to the Soudan a bold defiance to single combat.

Wherewith the Soudan all with fury fraught,  
Swearing and banning most blasphemously,  
Commanded straight his armour to be brought;  
And, mounting straight upon a chariot high,  
(With iron wheels and hooks armed dreadfully,  
And drawn of cruel steeds which he had fed  
With flesh of men, whom through fell tyranny  
He slaughtered had, and ere they were half dead  
Their bodies to his beasts for provender did spread.)

So forth he came all in a coat of plate  
Burnished with bloody rust; whiles on the green  
The Briton Prince him ready did await  
In glistening arms right goodly well beseen,

That shone as bright as doth the heaven sheen ;  
And by his stirrup Talus did attend,  
Playing his Page's part, as he had been  
Before directed by his Lord ; to th' end  
He should his flail to final execution bend.

Here, then, is the most serious and trying contest in which the noble Prince has yet been engaged. Those scythes with which this curious chariot is armed, render it impossible for him to approach near enough to do harm, either by sword or spear. He cannot reach his antagonist. That antagonist too has in the chariot abundance of javelins and other missiles capable of annoying, and by good luck, of slaying a foe at a distance. Even the horses that draw this formidable vehicle, by being long accustomed to feed on human flesh, have acquired a degree of ferocity fully equal to that of their ferocious driver. Arthur's horse takes fright at their strange and fierce looks.

But the bold Child that peril well espying,  
If he too rashly to his chariot drew,  
Gave way unto his horses speedy flying,  
And their resistless rigour did eschew :  
Yet, as he passéd by, the Pagan threw  
A shivering dart with so impetuous force,  
That, had he not it shunned with heedful view,  
It had himself transfixéd or his horse,  
Or made them both one mass withouten more remorse.

Oft drew the Prince unto his chariot nigh,  
In hope some stroke to fasten on him near ;  
But he was mounted in his seat so high,  
And his wing-footed coursers him did bear  
So fast away, that, ere his ready spear  
He could advance, he far was gone and past :  
Yet still he him did follow everywhere,

And followed was of him likewise full fast,  
So long as in his steeds the flaming breath did last.

Again the Pagan threw another dart,  
Of which he had with him abundant store  
On every side of his embattled cart,  
And of all other weapons less or more,  
Which warlike uses had devised of yore :  
The wicked shaft, guided through th' airy wide\*  
By some bad spirit that it to mischief bore,  
Stayed not, till through his curat† it did glide,  
And made a grisly wound in his enriven side.

Much was he grievéd with that hapless throw,  
That opened had the wellspring of his blood ;  
But much the more that to his hateful foe  
He might not come to wreak his wrathful mood :

\*                    \*                    \*                    \*                    \*

Still when he sought t' approach unto him nigh  
His chariot wheels about him whirléd round,  
And made him back again as fast to fly ;  
And eke his steeds, like to an hungry hound  
That hunting after game hath carrion found,  
So cruelly did him pursue and chase,  
That his good steed, all were he much renowned  
For noble courage and for hardy race,  
Durst not endure their sight, but fled from place to place.

Thus long they traced and traversed to and fro,  
Seeking by every way to make some breach ;  
Yet could the Prince not nigh unto him go,  
That one sure stroke he might unto him reach,  
Whereby his strength's assay he might him teach.

The Prince, in short, was at his wit's end. Not so  
the Poet. To enable the reader to understand what  
follows, it will be necessary to recur to the original

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\* *Airy wide*, airy void (?).

† *Curat*, cuirass.



description of Prince Arthur, where he first appears, in the seventh Canto of the first Book. In the sketch of that Book, this description was omitted, to make room for other matter necessary to the completeness of the adventure of the Red-Cross Knight and Lady Una. In like manner throughout the other Books, the Prince who has appeared so often to our relief, has been generally dismissed with a few complimentary phrases, which perhaps have been received only at the value ordinarily put upon phrases of compliment. It is too late now to repair the injury done to his character by these omissions. It is necessary, however, to the present story to quote three or four stanzas from the description of his armour in the first Book.

His warlike SHIELD all closely covered was,  
Ne might of mortal eye be ever seen :  
Not made of steel, nor of enduring brass,  
(Such earthly metals soon consuméd been),  
But all of *diamond* perfect pure and clean  
It framéd was, one massy entire mould,  
Hewn out of adamant rock with engines keen,  
That point of spear it never piercen could,  
Ne dint of direful sword divide the substance would.

The same to wight he never wont disclose,  
But whenas monsters huge he would dismay,  
Or daunt unequal armies of his foes,  
Or when the flying heavens he would affray :  
For so exceeding shone his glistening ray,  
That Phœbus' golden face it did attain,  
As when a cloud his beams doth over-lay ;  
And silver Cynthia waxéd pale and faint,  
As when her face is stained with magic arts' constraint.

No magic arts hereof had any might,  
Nor bloody words of bold Enchanter's call ;

But all, that was not such as seemed in sight,  
Before that shield did fade and sudden fall :  
And, when him list the rascal routs appal,  
Men into stones therewith he could transmew,  
And stones to dust, and dust to nought at all ;  
And, when him list the prouder looks subdue,  
He would them gazing blind, or turn to other hue.

The Prince was too proud to rely upon the virtues of this mysterious shield, except in cases of extreme danger. In fact, through all the trying contests in which he has been engaged, this is the first instance in which he has deigned to resort to it. But now, there seemed no other chance. The terrible scythes projecting on all sides from the Soudan's chariot, forbad all approach within fighting distance. Those ferocious horses, too, fed so long on human flesh, seemed to have the power of striking a mysterious terror into his. Behold then the phenomenon !

At last, from his victorious shield he drew  
The veil, which did his powerful light impeach ;  
And coming full before his horses' view,  
As they upon him pressed, it plain to them did shew.

Like lightning flash that hath the gazer burned,  
So did the sight thereof their sense dismay,  
That back again upon themselves they turned,  
And with their rider ran perforce away :  
Ne could the Soudan them from flying stay  
With reins or wonted rule, as well he knew :  
Nought fearéd they what he could do or say,  
But th' only fear that was before their view ;  
From which like mazéd deer dismayfully they flew.

Fast did they fly as them their feet could bear  
High over hills, and lowly over dales,

As they were followed of their former fear :  
In vain the Pagan bans, and swears, and rails,  
And back with both his hands unto him hales  
The resty reins, regarded now no more :  
He to them calls and speaks, yet nought avails ;  
They hear him not, they have forgot his lore ;  
But go which way they list ; their guide they have forlore.

Such was the fury of these headstrong steeds,  
Soon as the Infant's sunlike shield they saw,  
That all obedience both to words and deeds  
They quite forgot, and scorned all former law :  
Through woods, and rocks, and mountains they did draw  
The iron chariot, and the wheels did tear,  
And tossed the Paynim without fear or awe ;  
From side to side they tossed him here and there,  
Crying to them in vain that nould his crying hear.

Yet still the Prince pursued him close behind,  
Oft making offer him to smite, but found  
No easy means according to his mind ;  
At last they have all overthrown to ground  
Quite topside turvy, and the Pagan hound  
Amongst the iron hooks and grapples keen  
Torn all to rags, and rent with many a wound ;  
That no whole piece of him was to be seen,  
But scattered all about, and strowed upon the green.

Such was the end which every loyal subject of Elizabeth wished at least to the cruel bigot, Philip !

Adicia, the fierce Sultana who instigated the Soudan to his course, was a woman of a temper neither feeble nor serene. There are few things of the descriptive kind in the Fairy Queen, more stirring than the lines which follow. The reader will excuse me for once for presenting a picture of this horrible kind.

Which when his Lady from the Castle's height  
Beheld, it much appalled her troubled sprite :

Yet not, as women wont, in doleful fit  
She was dismayed, or fainted through affright,  
But gathered unto her her troubled wit,  
And gan eftsoons devise to be avenged for it.

Straight down she ran, like an enragéd cow  
That is berobbéd of her youngling dear,  
With knife in hand, and fatally did vow  
To wreak her on that maiden messenger,  
Whom she had caused be kept as prisoner  
By Artegal, misweened for her own Knight,  
That brought her back: and, coming present there,  
She at her ran with all her force and might,  
All flaming with revenge and furious despite.

But Artegal, being thereof aware,  
Did stay her cruel hand ere she her raught;  
And, as she did herself to strike prepare,  
Out of her fist the wicked weapon caught:  
With that, like one enfeloned or distraught,  
She forth did roam whither her rage her bore,  
With frantic passion, and with fury fraught;  
And, breaking forth out at a postern door,  
Unto the wild wood ran, her dolours to deplore:

As a mad bitch, whenas the frantic fit  
Her burning tongue with rage inflaméd hath,  
Doth run at random, and with furious bit  
Snatching at everything doth wreak her wrath  
On man and beast that cometh in her path.  
There they do say that she transforméd was  
Into a tiger, and that tiger's scath  
In cruelty and outrage she did pass,  
To prove her surname true, that she imposéd has.

The punishment of the Soudan and Adicia brings us to the close of the eighth Canto. A similar exposition of the four remaining Cantos would either extend



the present Essay entirely beyond the limits of discretion, or exclude all notice of the sixth Book. Let it suffice, therefore, to say, that the ninth Canto contains an elaborate allegorical description of the Court of Mercilla (Queen Elizabeth), which is visited by Artegal and Arthur for the purpose of witnessing the most noble and striking exhibitions of civil, political, and international justice;—the tenth and eleventh Cantos are occupied with an exploit of Prince Arthur, who undertakes, by Mercilla's permission, the deliverance of the Lady Belge (Holland), the overthrow of her oppressor Gerioneo (Duke of Alva), and the destruction of a most extraordinary but nameless Monster (the Inquisition), which Gerioneo had introduced into Belge's dominions; and lastly, in the twelfth Canto, Artegal and Talus accomplish their final and principal adventure, by succouring the Lady Irena (Ireland), and discomfiting her adversary Grantorto, who means the King of Spain, or rather the body of Spanish troops sent by Philip into Ireland to stir up sedition and revolt in that island.

In the discussion of the fifth Book of the *Fairy Queen*, some pains have been taken to explain the historical and political allusions. The allegory throughout the whole poem is susceptible of similar applications. It has been found indeed impossible to give these applications, without extending the commentary to an inordinate length. It seemed, however, but an act of justice to the author, in one Book at least, to show something of the extent, variety, depth, and fullness of his meaning, as well as his surpassing elegance and splendour. In the account which will be given

of the last Book, it will be necessary to avoid almost entirely historical illustrations, and to content oneself with directing attention principally, and even in that respect briefly, to those general moral truths which are shadowed forth in these allegorical representations.

## BOOK VI.

### THE LEGEND OF SIR CALIDORE, OR OF COURTESY.

Definition of the Subject—Character and Mission of Calidore—The Story of Crudor and Briana—The Swain in Lincoln Green—Calepine and Serena—The Blatant Beast—The Savage Man—Mirabella—Calidore among the Shepherds—Pastorella—Her Character—Colin's Shepherd's Lass—Conclusion—GENERAL REMARKS.

THE writers on morals among the Romans, made a fourfold division of the qualities which go to constitute human excellence. Their four cardinal virtues were Prudence, Justice, Temperance, and Fortitude. It will be perceived at once, that with so limited a number of virtues nominally, the ancients must have given to the terms used a far more comprehensive signification than that now assigned to them. In addition to this enlarged sense given to the terms, some of them, particularly Cicero, had a confused notion of a fifth element of moral character, not very well defined, not even distinctly named, not forming indeed a separate class of actions, but giving a *superadded* quality to actions of every other class. This undefined something of Cicero rests, it is conceived, upon a principle of the human mind of very general, perhaps universal, application. The mind sees in the Parthenon, or in York Minster, not merely massiveness, strength, durability, and whatever else is necessary to give the idea

of mechanical perfection, but something more and higher than mere height, and length, and weight, and colour—something not material, nor yet intellectual, though closely allied to the latter—something dependent on a certain mysterious symmetry of forms and architectural proportions, and demonstrable only to the consciousness of him who perceives it. You may see two buildings, both equally capable of yielding every material benefit for which they were designed; and yet, to the eye of the beholder, the one is a mere pile of marble, the other is a spiritual essence. There is belonging to this, a superadded glory, resulting indeed from sensible qualities, though not itself cognisable by the senses—something addressed directly to the soul of man.

The principle or faculty, whatever it is, which thus catches the very soul of architectural art, which perceives the rhythm of poetical numbers, which hears the concord of sweet sounds, which sees in a lovely face something more than mere features and colours, which feels in words fitly spoken something beside and beyond even the meaning—*this universal sense of the Beautiful*, whatever be its name, does not fail to find appropriate exercise in the contemplation of human actions. Human conduct may be in all respects in strict conformity with the requirements of law—it may be holy, temperate, chaste, friendly, or just—and, at the same time, may have, or fail to have, this additional quality of which I speak. Two men may be both celebrated for the same virtue. They may be both eminently just. Yet the one is regarded as severe and repulsive, while in the conduct of the other you shall see a kind of fitness, an indescribable grace in the



manner of doing an action, that fills and satisfies the sense of the beautiful. Two persons may be both equally generous. They may both confer on a third party a benefit of exactly equal pecuniary value. Yet in the gift of the one, there shall be an appropriateness, a studious regard to the feelings as well as the wants of the person obliged, a delicate sense of fitness as to the time and manner of conferring the benefit, far more precious than the gift itself.

Every act then, in addition to its own particular character, as being just, or temperate, or in other respects virtuous, may have this other enviable quality of which I have been speaking. There is around the conduct of some persons a mild and benignant lustre which shines forth in all they do—a sort of super-investing glory, enveloping and ennobling their whole character. It was this noble idea, the *το καλον* of Xenophon and Plato, the *decus et honestum* of Cicero, which seems to have filled the mind of Spenser, when he gave to the world that series of graceful delineations which compose the sixth Book of the Fairy Queen, entitled the Legend of Calidore, or of Courtesy.

In the delineation of the character of Calidore, Spenser undoubtedly had in view his friend, the gallant and chivalrous Sir Philip Sidney. Sir Calidore was the chief ornament of the Court of Gloriana, Queen of Fairy. His name (*Καλλι�δωρος*) is an index to his character and office. It is composed of two Greek words, *δωρα* *gifts*, indicative both of generosity and talents (liberal in giving and liberally endowed), and *καλλος*, a word difficult to translate, but pointing to that quality in actions and things of which I have been speaking, and which forms an object for our sense

of the beautiful. As was his name, so was he, gifted, generous, high-minded, honourable, gracious:—

“The expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,  
The observed of all observers.”

The first Canto begins with the following stanzas.

Of Court, it seems men Courtesy do call,  
For that it there most useth to abound;  
And well beseemeth that in Princes' hall  
That Virtue should be plentifully found,  
Which of all goodly manners is the ground,  
And root of civil conversation:  
Right so in Fairy Court it did redound,  
Where courteous Knights and Ladies most did won  
Of all on earth, and made a matchless paragon.

But mongst them all was none more courteous Knight  
Than Calidore, belovéd over all:  
In whom it seems that gentleness of sprite  
And manners mild were planted natural;  
To which he adding comely guise withal  
And gracious speech, did steal men's hearts away:  
Nathless thereto he was full stout and tall,  
And well approved in battailous affray,  
That him did much renown, and far his fame display.

Ne was there Knight ne was there Lady found  
In Fairy Court, but him did dear embrace  
For his fair usage and conditions sound,  
The which in all men's liking gainéd place,  
And with the greatest purchased greatest grace;  
Which he could wisely use, and well apply,  
To please the best, and the evil to embase:  
For he loathed leasing and base flattery,  
And lovéd simple truth and steadfast honesty.

The adventure upon which Sir Calidore was sent,  
was to pursue and punish an odious monster called

the Blatant Beast. By the Blatant Beast, Spenser means Slander. To drive this foul spirit from the earth, was a work peculiarly fitted for him who was the flower of Courtesy. Honour and truth are legitimate weapons to be used against falsehood and calumny. The conquest over the Blatant Beast does not take place till the twelfth Canto. The intervening Cantos are occupied with various incidental adventures illustrating the principles of honour and courtesy, by examples of the virtue and of its opposite.

The first of these adventures is introduced in the following stanzas :

Sir Calidore thence travelléd not long,  
Whenas by chance a comely Squire he found,  
That thorough some more mighty enemy's wrong  
Both hand and foot unto a tree was bound ;  
Who, seeing him from far, with piteous sound  
Of his shrill cries him calléd to his aid :  
To whom approaching, in that painful stound,  
When he him saw, for no demands he stayed,  
But first him loosed, and afterwards thus to him said :

“ Unhappy Squire, what hard mishap thee brought  
Into this bay of peril and disgrace ?  
What cruel hand thy wretched thraldom wrought,  
And thee captivé in this shameful place ? ”  
To whom he answered thus : “ My hapless case  
Is not occasioned through my misdesert,  
But through misfortune, which did me abase  
Unto this shame, and my young hope subvert,  
Ere that I in her guileful trains was well expert.

“ Not far from hence, upon yon rocky hill,  
Hard by a strait, there stands a Castle strong,  
Which doth observe a custom lewd and ill,  
And it hath long maintained with mighty wrong :

For may no Knight nor Lady pass along  
That way (and yet they needs must pass that way,  
By reason of the strait, and rocks among)  
But they that Lady's locks do shave away,  
And that Knight's beard, for toll which they for passage  
pay."

"A shameful use as ever I did hear,"  
Said Calidore, "and to be overthrown.  
But by what means did they at first it rear,  
And for what cause? tell if thou have it known."

The story of the unhappy Squire is this. Crudor was a cruel and scornful Knight. Briana, a dame of high rank, wished him in marriage. Crudor imposed the condition that she should first furnish him with a mantle lined throughout with the beards of Knights and the locks of Ladies, dishonoured for this purpose. To collect the materials for such an extraordinary garment, Briana maintained at her castle a Seneschal of great strength and valour, Maleffort by name, who assaulted travellers passing by, and tying them to a tree, cut off their beards or locks and carried his spoils to the castle. The Squire concludes—

"He, this same day as I that way did come  
With a fair Damsel my belovéd dear,  
In execution of her lawless doom  
Did set upon us flying both for fear;  
For little boots against him hand to rear:  
Me first he took unable to withstand,  
And whiles he her pursuéd everywhere,  
Till his return unto this tree he bound;  
Ne wot I surely whether he her yet have found."

Thus whiles they spake they heard a rueful shriek  
Of one loud crying, while they straightway guessed



That it was she the which for help did seek.  
 Then, looking up unto the cry to list,  
 They saw that Carl from far with hand unblest  
 Haling that Maiden by the yellow hair,  
 That all her garments from her snowy breast,  
 And from her head her locks he nigh did tear,  
 Ne would he spare for pity, nor refrain for fear.

Which heinous sight when Calidore beheld,  
 Eftsoons he loosed that Squire, and so him left  
 With heart's dismay and inward dolour quelled,  
 For to pursue that Villain, which had reft  
 That piteous spoil by so injurious theft:  
 Whom overtaking, loud to him he cried:  
 "Leave, faitour,\* quickly that misgotten weft†  
 To him that had it better justified,  
 And turn thee soon to him of whom thou art defied."

It is not necessary to pursue this exploit. Calidore of course interposes and puts an end to the ungentle custom, so unworthy the valour of Crudor and the rank of Briana. The accomplishment of this occupies the first Canto. It illustrates the abuses of power when lodged in the hands of those whose hearts have never been touched by the spirit of true honour. A courteous man or a gentle dame will never impose or accept conditions dishonourable to manhood.

Sir Artegal or Sir Guyon would no doubt have interposed as Sir Calidore did, but not with that innate grace, that matchless felicity of manner which marked his every deed.

What virtue is so fitting for a Knight,  
 Or for a lady whom a Knight should love,  
 As Courtesy; to bear themselves aright  
 To all of each degree as doth behove?

---

\* *Faitour*, knave.

† *Weft*, a thing waived, left, dropped, &c.

For whether they be placéd high above  
Or low beneath, yet ought they well to know  
Their good ; that none them rightly may reprove  
Of rudeness for not yielding what they owe :  
Great skill it is such duties timely to bestow.

Thereto great help Dame Nature self doth lend :  
For some so goodly gracious are by kind,  
That every action doth them much commend,  
And in the eyes of men great liking find ;  
Which others that have greater skill in mind,  
Though they enforce themselves, cannot attain :  
For everything to which one is inclined,  
Doth best become and greatest grace doth gain ;  
Yet praise likewise deserve good thews enforced with pain.

That well in courteous Calidore appears ;  
Whose every act and deed, that he did say,  
Was like enchantment, that through both the ears  
And both the eyes did steal the heart away.

Sir Calidore, setting out once more in quest of the Blatant Beast, meets with another incident of a beautiful character, from which I shall quote pretty freely. To understand one point in this incident, the reader will remember, it was a law of arms in the days of chivalry, that no swain or man of low degree should presume to strike a Knight.

He now again is on his former way  
To follow his first quest, whenas he spied  
A tall young man, from thence not far away,  
Fighting on foot, as well he him descried,  
Against an arméd Knight that did on horseback ride.

And them beside a Lady fair he saw  
Standing alone on foot in foul array ;  
To whom himself he hastily did draw  
To weet the cause of so uncomely fray,

And to depart them, if so be he may :  
But, ere he came in place, that Youth had killed  
That arméd Knight, that low on ground he lay ;  
Which when he saw, his heart was inly chilled  
With great amazement, and his thought with wonder filled.

Him steadfastly he marked, and saw to be  
A goodly youth of amiable grace,  
Yet but a slender slip, that scarce did see  
Yet seventeen years, but tall and fair of face,  
That sure he deemed him born of noble race :  
All in a woodman's jacket he was clad,  
Of Lincoln green, belayed with silver lace ;  
And on his head an hood with aglets spread,  
And by his side his hunter's horn he hanging had.

Buskins he wore of costliest cordwain,  
Pinked upon gold, and paléd part per part,  
As then the guise was for each gentle swain :  
In his right hand he held a trembling dart,  
Whose fellow he before had sent apart,  
And in his left he held a sharp boar-spear,  
With which he wont to launch the savage heart  
Of many a lion and of many a bear,  
That first unto his hand in chase did happen near.

Whom Calidore awhile well having viewed,  
At length bespake : " What means this, gentle Swain !  
Why hath thy hand too bold, itself embrued  
In blood of Knight, the which by thee is slain,  
By thee no Knight ; which arms impugneth plain !"  
" Certes," said he, " loth were I to have broken  
The Law of Arms ; yet break it should again,  
Rather than let myself of wight be stroken,  
So long as these two arms were able to be wroken.

" For not I him, as this his Lady here  
May witness well, did offer first to wrong,  
Ne surely thus unarmed I likely were ;  
But he me first, through pride and puissance strong,

Assailed, not knowing what to arms doth long."  
"Perdy great blame," then said Sir Calidore,  
"For arméd Knight a wight unarmed to wrong :  
But then aread, thou gentle Child, wherefore  
Betwixt you two began this strife and stern uproar."

"That shall I sooth," said he, "to you declare.  
I, whose unriper years are yet unfit  
For thing of weight or work of greater care,  
Do spend my days and bend my careless wit  
To savage chase, where I thereon may hit  
In all this forest and wild woody reign :  
Where, as this day I was enraging it,  
I chanced to meet this Knight who there lies slain,  
Together with this Lady, passing on the plain.

"The Knight, as ye did see, on horseback was,  
And this his Lady, that him ill became,  
On her fair feet by his horse-side did pass  
Through thick and thin, unfit for any Dame :  
Yet not content, more to increase his shame,  
Whensó she laggéd, as she needs must so,  
He with his spear (that was to him great blame)  
Would thump her forward and enforce to go,  
Weeping to him in vain and making piteous wo.

"Which when I saw, as they me passéd by,  
Much was I movéd in indignant mind,  
And gan to blame him for such cruelty  
Towards a Lady, whom with usage kind  
He rather should have taken up behind.  
Wherewith he wroth and full of proud disdain  
Took in foul scorn that I such fault did find,  
And me in lieu thereof reviled again,  
Threatening to chastise me, as doth t' a child pertain.

"Which I no less disdaining, back returned  
His scornful taunts unto his teeth again,  
That he straightway with haughty choler burned,  
And with his spear struck me one stroke or twain ;



Which I, enforced to bear though to my pain,  
Cast to requite ; and with a slender dart,  
Fellow of this I bear, thrown not in vain,  
Struck him, as seemeth, underneath the heart,  
That through the wound his spirit shortly did depart."

Calidore was not the man to mistake the form for the substance. The slain Knight, whatever may have been the quarterings upon his shield, was the real boor ; the swain in Lincoln Green was the real gentleman : for then, as now, "Wealth and rank are but the guinea's stamp, the *man's* the gold for a' that." So thought Sir Calidore.

Then turning back unto that gentle Boy,  
Which had himself so stoutly well acquit ;  
Seeing his face so lovely stern and coy,  
And hearing th' answers of his pregnant wit,  
He praised it much, and much admiréd it ;  
That sure he weened him born of noble blood,  
With whom those graces did so goodly fit :  
And, when he long had him beholding stood,  
He burst into these words, as to him seeméd good.

Calidore complimented the youth upon his gallantry, and inquired further of his history. This introduces a distinguished character and a new story, which must be left untouched. The Swain in Lincoln Green, who becomes afterwards the famous Sir Tristram of the Round Table, says he had lived in these woods since he was ten years of age.

"All which my days I have not lewdly spent,  
Nor spilt the blossom of my tender years  
In idleness : but, as was convenient,  
Have trained been with many noble feres  
In gentle thews and such like seemly leres :

Mongst which my most delight hath always been  
To hunt the savage chase, amongst my peers,  
Of all that rangeth in the forest green,  
Of which none is to me unknown that ev'r was seen.

“Ne is there hawk which mantleth her on perch,  
Whether high towering or accoasting low,  
But I the measure of her flight do search,  
And all her prey and all her diet know:  
Such be our joys which in these forests grow:  
Only the use of arms, which most I joy,  
And fitteth most for noble Swain to know,  
I have not tasted yet; yet past a Boy,  
And being now high time these strong joints to employ.

“Therefore, good Sir, since now occasion fit  
Doth fall, whose like hereafter seldom may,  
Let me this crave, unworthy though of it,  
That ye will make me Squire without delay,  
That from henceforth in battailous array  
I may bear arms, and learn to use them right;  
The rather, since that fortune hath this day  
Given to me the spoil of this dead Knight,  
These goodly gilded arms which I have won in fight.”

All which when well Sir Calidore had heard,  
Him much more now, than erst, he gan admire  
For the rare hope which in his years appeared,  
And thus replied: “Fair Child, the high desire  
To love of arms, which in you doth aspire,  
I may not certes without blame deny;  
But rather wish that some more noble hire  
(Though none more noble than is Chivalry)  
I had, you to reward with greater dignity.”

There him he caused to kneel, and made to swear  
Faith to his Knight, and truth to Ladies all,  
And never to be recreant for fear  
Of peril, or of ought that might befall:  
So he him dubbéd, and his Squire did call.

Full glad and joyous then young Tristram grew ;  
Like as a flower, whose silken leavés small  
Long shut up in the bud from heaven's view,  
At length breaks forth, and broad displays his smiling hue.

Tristram, grateful for this boon, and eager to distinguish himself in his new profession, offered his services to his benefactor to follow him as his Squire. Calidore declined, being under a vow to pursue his quest of the Blatant Beast unattended ; but directed the Squire to take charge of the unfortunate Lady and conduct her safely and honourably to her home.

Calidore proceeded, therefore, alone.

So, as he was pursuing of his quest,  
He chanced to come whereas a jolly Knight  
In covert shade himself did safely rest,  
To solace with his Lady in delight :  
His warlike arms he had from him undight ;  
For that himself he thought from danger free,  
And far from envious eyes that mote him spite :  
And eke the Lady was full fair to see,  
And courteous withal, becoming her degree.

To whom Sir Calidore approaching nigh,  
Ere they were well aware of living wight,  
Them much abashed, but more himself thereby,  
That he so rudely did upon them light,  
And troubled had their quiet love's delight ;  
Yet since it was his fortune, not his fault,  
Himself thereof he laboured to acquit,  
And pardon craved for his so rash default,  
That he gainst courtesy so foully did default.

With which his gentle words and goodly wit  
He soon allayed that Knight's conceived displeasure,  
That he besought him down by him to sit,  
That they mote treat of things abroad at leisure,

And of adventures, which had in his measure  
 Of so long ways to him befallen late.  
 So down he sat, and with delightful pleasure  
 His long adventures gan to him relate,  
 Which he enduréd had through dangerous debate :

Of which whilst they discourséd both together,  
 The fair Serena, (so his Lady hight,)  
 Allured with mildness of the gentle weather  
 And pleasance of the place, the which was dight  
 With divers flowers distinct with rare delight,  
 Wandered about the fields, as liking led  
 Her wavering lust after her wandering sight,  
 To make a garland to adorn her head,  
 Without suspect of ill or danger's hidden dread.

All suddenly out of the forest near  
 The Blatant Beast forth rushing unaware  
 Caught her thus loosely wandering here and there,  
 And in his wide great mouth away her bare,  
 Crying aloud to shew her sad misfare  
 Unto the Knights, and calling oft for aid ;  
 Who with the horror of her hapless care  
 Hastily starting up, like men dismayed,  
 Ran after fast to rescue the distresséd Maid.

The case of Sir Calepine and Serena is not a solitary one. They were innocent, but indiscreet. The occasion was a fitting one for the appearance of the Blatant Beast. *The indiscretions of the good have ever been the savoury meat of Slander.* The monster is ever prowling around in the moments of unguarded confidence, ready to plunge his fangs into the reputation, and to wound the peace of his victims. Calidore immediately seized his arms and pursued his foe. So hot was his pursuit, that the Blatant Beast was obliged to drop the Lady. Leaving her to be cared for by



her Knight, Calidore pressed forward after the Beast and followed it many a weary league. This chase continues for days, weeks, and even months. During its continuance, which must perforce be left to the imagination of the reader, a great variety of other incidents occur to other parties, occupying five Cantos, viz.: the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth. At length, in the ninth Canto, Calidore and the Beast again appear, and the main action of the Book is resumed.

In these intervening incidents, between the third Canto and the ninth, the principal actors are Prince Arthur and Timias, and several distinguished new characters, which, to be understood, would require in the commentary, as they possess in the poem, considerable space. One of them is a character that is peculiarly pleasing to the imagination. Its study is particularly recommended to those readers who may be persuaded to peruse the poem itself. A few stanzas are quoted, merely to introduce him to your notice. He first presents himself under the following circumstances.

A virtuous but feeble and wounded Knight is travelling with his Lady who is sick. A powerful but discourteous Knight, falling in company with them, not only refuses the rights of hospitality and good fellowship, but attacks and pursues the feeble Knight. They are in a forest, and the most shameful outrage is expected. But a deliverer of strange and uncouth kind appears.

By fortune passing all foresight,  
A Savage Man, which in those woods did won,

Drawn with that Lady's loud and piteous shright,\*  
Toward the same incessantly did run  
To understand what there was to be done:  
There he this most discourteous Craven found  
As fiercely yet, as when he first begun,  
Chasing the gentle Calepine around,  
Ne sparing him the more for all his grievous wound.

The Savage Man, that never till this hour  
Did taste of pity, neither gentlesse knew,  
Seeing his sharp assault and cruel stour  
Was much enmovéd at his peril's view,  
That even his ruder heart began to rue,  
And feel compassion of his evil plight,  
Against his foe that did him so pursue;  
From whom he meant to free him, if he might,  
And him avenge of that so villanous despite.

Yet arms or weapon had he none to fight,  
Ne knew the use of warlike instruments,  
Save such as sudden rage him lent to smite;  
But naked, without needful vestiments  
To clad his corpse with meet habiliments,  
He caréd not for dint of sword nor spear,  
No more than for the stroke of straws or bents:  
For from his mother's womb, which him did bear,  
He was invulnerable made by magic lear.

He stayéd not t' advise which way were best  
His foe t' assail, or how himself to guard,  
But with fierce fury and with force infest  
Upon him ran; who being well prepared  
His first assault full warily did ward,  
And with the push of his sharp-pointed spear  
Full on the breast him struck, so strong and hard  
That forced him back recoil and reel arear;  
Yet in his body made no wound nor blood appear.

---

\* *Shright*, shriek.

With that the Wild Man more enragéd grew,  
Like to a tiger that has missed his prey,  
And with mad mood again upon him flew,  
Regarding neither spear that mote him slay,  
Nor his fierce steed that mote him much dismay :  
The savage nation doth all dread despise :  
Then on his shield he griple hold did lay,  
And held the same so hard, that by no wise  
He could him force to loose, or leave his enterprise.

Long did he wrest and wring it to and fro,  
And every way did try, but all in vain ;  
For he would not his greedy gripe forego,  
But haled and pulled with all his might and main,  
That from his steed him nigh he drew again :  
Who having now no use of his long spear  
So nigh at hand, nor force his shield to strain,  
Both spear and shield, as things that needless were,  
He quite forsook, and fled himself away for fear.

But after him the Wild Man ran apace,  
And him pursuéd with impórtune speed,  
For he was swift as any buck in chase ;  
And, had he not in his extremest need  
Been helpéd through the swiftness of his steed,  
He had him overtaken in his flight.  
Who, ever as he saw him nigh succeed,  
Gan cry aloud with horrible affright,  
And shriekéd out ; a thing uncomely for a Knight.

The sick and terrified Lady is relieved of course when she sees the discourteous Knight thus driven off by this strange deliverer. The Savage, however, after long and unsuccessful pursuit of the Knight, returns towards the place where the Lady is lying. Again her terrors are awakened. The reader has not forgotten Florimel and the Fisherman. Who can tell what passions may lurk beneath that grim visage ?

But the Wild Man, contráry to her fear,  
Came to her creeping like a fawning hound,  
And by rude tokens made to her appear  
His deep compassion of her doleful stound,  
Kissing his hands, and crouching to the ground ;  
For other language had he none nor speech,  
But a soft murmur and confuséd sound  
Of senseless words (which Nature did him teach  
T' express his passions) which his reason did impeach :

And coming likewise to the wounded Knight,  
When he beheld the streams of purple blood  
Yet flowing fresh, as movéd with the sight,  
He made great moan after his savage mood ;  
And, running straight into the thickest wood,  
A certain herb from thence unto him brought,  
Whose virtue he by use well understood ;  
The juice whereof into his wound he wrought,  
And stopped the bleeding straight, ere he it staunchéd  
thought.

Then taking up that recreant's shield and spear  
Which erst he left, he signs unto them made  
With him to wend unto his winning near ;  
To which he easily did them persuade.  
Far in the forest, by a hollow glade  
Covered with mossy shrubs, which spreading broad,  
Did underneath them make a gloomy shade,  
Where foot of living creature never trode,  
Ne scarce wild beasts durst come, there was this wight's  
abode.

Thither he brought these unacquainted guests ;  
To whom fair semblance, as he could, he showed  
By signs, by looks, and all his other gests :  
But the bare ground with hoary moss bestrowed  
Must be their bed ; their pillow was unsowed ;  
And the fruits of the forest was their feast :  
For their bad Steward neither ploughed nor sowed,



Ne fed on flesh, ne ever of wild beast  
Did taste the blood, obeying Nature's first behest.

Yet, howsoever base and mean it were,  
They took it well, and thanked God for all,  
Which had them freed from that deadly fear,  
And saved from being to that Caitiff thrall.  
Here they of force (as fortune now did fall)  
Compelléd were themselves awhile to rest,  
Glad of that easement, though it were but small ;  
That, having there their wounds awhile redressed,  
They mote the abler be to pass unto the rest.

During which time that Wild Man did apply  
His best endeavour and his daily pain  
In seeking all the woods both far and nigh  
For herbs to dress their wounds ; still seeming fain,  
When ought he did, that did their liking gain.  
So as ere long he had that Knightés wound  
Recuréd well, and made him whole again :  
But that same Lady's hurts no herb he found  
Which could redress, for it was inwardly unsound.

By an incident, which it is unnecessary to relate, the wounded Knight was drawn off one day into a distant part of the forest, and could not find his way back. The Lady then was left alone in the woods with this strange companion. The Savage, missing the Knight, and fearing some mishap, went in search of him. After scouring the woods many hours in vain, he returned to his abode, to communicate the sad tidings to the Lady.

Then, back returning to that sorry Dame,  
He shewéd semblant of exceeding moan  
By speaking signs, as he them best could frame,  
Now wringing both his wretched hands in one,  
Now beating his hard head upon a stone,

That ruth it was to see him so lament :  
By which she well perceiving what was done,  
Gan tear her hair, and all her garments rent,  
And beat her breast, and piteously herself torment.

Upon the ground herself she fiercely threw,  
Regardless of her wounds yet bleeding rife,  
That with their blood did all the floor imbrue,  
As if her breast new lanced with murderous knife  
Would strait dislodge the wretched weary Life :  
There she long grovelling and deep groaning lay,  
As if her vital powers were at strife  
With stronger Death, and fearéd their decay :  
Such were this Lady's pangs and dolorous assay.

Whom when the Savage saw so sore distressed,  
He reared her up from the bloody ground,  
And sought, by all the means that he could best,  
Her to recure out of that stony swound,  
And staunch the bleeding of her dreary wound :  
Yet n'ould she be recomforted for nought,  
Nor cease her sorrow and impatient stound,  
But day and night did vex her careful thought,  
And ever more and more her own affliction wrought.

This wild but gentle-hearted creature is no doubt Spenser's idea of what Sir Calidore, *or any other true gentleman*, would be without the advantages of education, or the cultivation of artificial life. To my mind, it is one of Spenser's most beautiful creations. After several adventures, the gentle Savage meets with Prince Arthur, and witnesses some of that noble person's exploits. The princely demeanour, the lofty bearing, the graceful and finished courtesy of Arthur, awaken in the breast of the wild man an unbounded admiration for the Prince, and that kind of intense devotion to his person which marks a woman's love.

I confess, I like even Prince Arthur better, for the love and devotion which he inspires in the breast of this savage man. I must, however, drop the adventure, leaving the issue to the reader's imagination, or his—curiosity. Enough, however, has been seen of this singular being, to show the entire appropriateness of such an adventure to the Legend of Courtesy.

There is another leading character in this Book, which I can only introduce to the reader, leaving the cultivation of a farther acquaintance to the option of the parties.

She was a Lady of great dignity,  
 And lifted up to honourable place,  
 Famous through all the Land of Faéry:  
 Though of mean parentage and kindred base,  
 Yet decked with wondrous gifts of nature's grace,  
 That all men did her person much admire,  
 And praise the feature of her goodly face;  
 The beams whereof did kindle lovely fire  
 In th' hearts of many a Knight, and many a gentle Squire:

But she thereof grew proud and insolent,  
 That none she worthy thought to be her fere,  
 But scorned them all that love unto her meant;  
 Yet was she loved of many a worthy Peer:  
 Unworthy she to be beloved so dear,  
 That could not weigh a worthiness aright:  
 For beauty is more glorious bright and clear,  
 The more it is admired of many a wight,  
 And noblest she that servéd is of noblest Knight.

But this coy Damsel thought contráriwise,  
 That such proud looks would make her praised more,  
 And that, the more she did all love despise,  
 The more would wretched Lovers her adore.  
 What caréd she who sighéd for her sore,

Or who did wail or watch the weary night?  
Let them that list their luckless lot deplore;  
She was born free, not bound to any wight,  
And so would ever live, and love her own delight.

Through such her stubborn stiffness and hard heart,  
Many a wretch for want of remedy  
Did languish long in life-consuming smart,  
And at the last through dreary dolour die:  
Whilst she, the Lady of her liberty,  
Did boast her beauty had such sovereign might,  
That with the only twinkle of her eye  
She could or save or spill whom she would hight:  
What could the Gods do more, but do it more aright?

Mirabel at length was summoned before the Court of Cupid to answer for her faults. She was found guilty and condemned. Her punishment was, that she should wander about the world riding upon an ass, driven by a fool, and led by a rude carl, called Disdain. She should continue this wandering, until she had healed as many hearts as she had broken. When first met, she had travelled for two years, and yet had cured but two hearts, while in an equal time previous, she had destroyed two-and-twenty!

Her own account of the matter to Prince Arthur is as follows:—

Then bursting forth in tears, which gushéd fast  
Like many water-streams, awhile she stayed;  
Till the sharp passion being overpast,  
Her tongue to her restored, then thus she said:  
“Nor heavens, nor men, can me most wretched Maid  
Deliver from the doom of my desert,  
The which the God of Love hath on me laid,  
And damnéd to endure this direful smart,  
For penance of my proud and hard rebellious heart.



"In prime of youthly years, when first the flower  
 Of beauty gan to bud, and bloom delight ;  
 And Nature me endued with plenteous dower  
 Of all her gifts, that pleased each living sight ;  
 I was beloved of many a gentle Knight,  
 And sued and sought with all the service due :  
 Full many a one for me deep groaned and sigh't,  
 And to the door of death for sorrow drew,  
 Complaining *out on me* that would not on them rue.

"But let them love that list, or live or die ;  
 Me list not die for any lover's dole :  
 Ne list me leave my lovéd liberty  
 To pity him that list to play the fool :  
 To love myself I learnéd had in school.  
 Thus I triumphéd long in lover's pain,  
 And, sitting careless on the scorner's stool,  
 Did laugh at those that did lament and plain :  
 But all is now repaid with interest again.

"For lo ! the wingéd god, that woundeth hearts,  
 Caused me to be called to account therefor ;  
 And for revengement of those wrongful smarts,  
 Which I to others did inflict afore,  
 Addeemed me to endure this penance sore ;  
 That in this wise, and this unmeet array,  
 With these two lewd companions, and no more,  
 Disdain and Scorn, I through the world should stray,  
 Till I have saved so many as I erst did slay."

"Certes," said then the Prince, "the god is just,  
 That taketh vengeance of his people's spoil :  
 For were no law in love, but all that lust  
 Might them oppress, and painfully turmoil,  
 His kingdom would continue but a while.  
 But tell me, Lady, wherefore do you bear  
 This bottle thus before you with such toil,  
 And eke this wallet at your back arrear,  
 That for these Carls to carry much more comely were ?"

"Here in this bottle," said the sorry Maid,  
 "I put the tears of my contrition,  
 Till to the brim I have it full defrayed :  
 And in this bag, which I behind me don,  
 I put repentance for things past and gone.  
 Yet is the bottle leak, and bag so torn,  
 That all which I put in falls out anon,  
 And is behind me trodden down of Scorn,  
 Who mocketh all my pain, and laughs the more I mourn."

What Spenser meant by MIRABEL, perhaps it might not be courteous to say. Perhaps, also, it is not necessary. Dropping, however, its general meaning, the discussion of which might involve the commentator in difficulty with a portion of his readers, one can hardly be wrong in the conjecture, that for the original of this significant portrait, Spenser drew from memory. The cheerless iceberg, whom in his earlier poems he celebrates under the name of Rosalind, after enjoying for a few years the consciousness of her power, and indulging in a species of triumph of all kinds the most contemptible, may not improbably have shared the fate common to such characters. *It is, I believe, not uncommon for the woman that trifles, to be trifled with, just about the time that she begins to be serious.* It excites therefore neither pity nor surprise to see her travelling the rest of her pilgrimage through the world, the butt of Folly, a sure mark for Disdain.

It is time to return to Sir Calidore.

Great travel hath the gentle Calidore  
 And toil enduréd, since I left him last  
 Suing the Blatant Beast ; which I forbore  
 To finish then, for other present haste.  
 Full many paths and perils he hath passed,

Through hills, through dales, through forests, and  
through plains,  
In that same quest which fortune on him cast,  
Which he achievéd to his own great gains,  
Reaping eternal glory of his restless pains.

So sharply he the Monster did pursue,  
That day nor night he suffered him to rest,  
Ne rested he himself (but nature's due)  
For dread of danger not to be redressed,  
If he for sloth forslacked so famous quest.  
Him first from court he to the cities coursed,  
And from the cities to the towns him pressed,  
And from the towns into the country forced,  
And from the country back to private farms he scorsed.\*

From thence into the open fields he fled,  
Whereas the herds were keeping of their neat,  
And shepherds singing, to their flocks that fed,  
Lays of sweet love and youth's delightful heat:  
Him thither eke for all his fearful threat  
He followed fast, and chaséd him so nigh,  
That to the folds, where sheep at night do seat,  
And to the little cots, where shepherds lie  
In winter's wrathful time, he forcéd him to fly.

He who attempts to hunt down calumny, will find he has a long and wearisome chase before him. Let a lie be once raised against your good name, let any piece of private scandal, no matter how false, once get abroad, and depend upon it, you will have a weary labour before you expel it from the minds of men. When you have exterminated it from one circle, it is but a signal for its reappearance in another. At the very moment when you think you have "nailed it to the counter," you find it rolling on the pavement.

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\* *Scorsed*, coursed, chased.

Calidore pursued the Blatant Beast from the highest court circles down to the very lowest and least artificial form of civilized society. The flower of courtesy is now for the first time brought into contact with the shepherd character. He who had spent his life among Lords and Ladies, and who had gained among them so much renown by his gentle and courteous demeanour, is now to mix with plain, unsophisticated country people. But Calidore's ascendancy over the minds of men does not depend upon his gestures or his attire, the frippery of his tailor, or the grimaces of his dancing-master. His manners spring from his heart. They are the natural and spontaneous out-workings of a soul tremblingly alive to a sense of the beautiful. The mild lustre of such a soul will send forth its steady light, wherever it may be placed—among the gay halls of fashion, or in the humble cot of the shepherd.

To resume the story. Calidore continued his chase after the Blatant Beast.

There on a day, as he pursued the chase,  
He chanced to spy a sort of shepherd grooms  
Playing on pipes and carolling apace,  
The whiles their beasts there in the budded brooms  
Beside them fed, and nipped the tender blooms;  
For other worldly wealth they caréd nought;  
To whom Sir Calidore yet sweating comes,  
And them to tell him courteously besought,  
If such a beast they saw, which he had thither brought.

They answered him that no such beast they saw,  
Nor any wicked fiend that mote offend  
Their happy flocks, nor danger to them draw;  
But if that such there were (as none they kenned)



They prayed High God them far from them to send  
Then one of them seeing him so to sweat,  
After his rustic wise, that well he weened,  
Offered him drink to quench his thirsty heat,  
And, if he hungry were, him offered eke to eat.

The Knight was nothing nice, where was no need,  
And took their gentle offer : so adown  
They prayed him sit, and gave him for to feed  
Such homely what as serves the simple clown,  
That doth despise the dainties of the town :  
Then having fed his fill, he there beside  
Saw a fair Damsel, which did wear a crown  
Of sundry flowers with silken ribands tied,  
Yclad in home-made green that her own hands had dyed.

Upon a little hillock she was placed  
Higher than all the rest, and round about  
Environed with a garland, goodly graced,  
Of lovely lasses ; and them all without  
The lusty shepherd swains sat in a rout,  
The which did pipe and sing her praises due,  
And oft rejoyce, and oft for wonder shout,  
As if some miracle of heavenly hue  
Were down to them descended in that earthly view.

And soothly sure she was full fair of face,  
And perfectly well shaped in every limb,  
Which she did more augment with modest grace  
And comely carriage of her countenance trim,  
That all the rest like lesser lamps did dim :  
Who, her admiring as some heavenly wight,  
Did for their sovereign goddess her esteem,  
And, carolling her name both day and night,  
The fairest PASTORELLA her by name did hight.

Ne was there herd, ne was there shepherd's swain,  
But her did honour ; and eke many a one  
Burnt in her love, and with sweet pleasing pain  
Full many a night for her did sigh and groan ;

But most of all the shepherds Coridon  
For her did languish, and his dear life spend ;  
Yet neither she for him nor other none  
Did care a whit, ne any liking lend :  
Though mean her lot, yet higher did her mind ascend.

Her whiles Sir Calidore there viewéd well,  
And marked her rare demeanour, which him seemed  
So far the mean of shepherds to excel,  
As that he in his mind her worthy deemed  
To be a Princess' paragon esteemed,  
He was unwares surprised in subtle bands  
Of the Blind Boy ; ne thence could be redeemed  
By any skill out of his cruel hands ;  
Caught like the bird which gazing still on others stands.

So stood he still long gazing thereupon,  
Ne any will had thence to move away,  
Although his quest were far before him gone :  
But after he had fed, yet did he stay  
And sat there still, until the flying day  
Was far forth spent, discoursing diversely  
Of sundry things, as fell, to work delay ;  
And evermore his speech he did apply  
To th' herds, but meant them to the Damsel's fantasy.

At length night came on, and the rustics began to  
make preparations for retiring from the fields to their  
various homes.

Then came to them a good old aged sire,  
Whose silver locks bedecked his beard and head,  
With shepherd's hook in hand, and fit attire,  
That willed the Damsel rise : the day did now expire.

This old man is the foster-father of PASTOREL. He  
had found her, an infant, in the open fields, and having  
no other child, had nourished her as his own. Pas-  
torel knew not that she was not his daughter. Neither

Melibœus, nor any of his neighbours, knew her real parentage; though in the exquisite native graces of her now budding womanhood, the practised eye of one who had seen much of life, might detect evidences of gentle blood. The simple-minded shepherds and shepherdesses among whom she lived, did not of course enter into any such speculations about her. They only knew, they loved her with a sort of affection which they never thought of entertaining towards one another, or towards any one else that they had ever known. She was among them, but not of them, a sweet and gentle being, meek, winning, pleasant to all; and, what is most difficult, giving no pain or offence, where she was obliged to withhold her love. She did not scorn those poor people. Why should she? They were her people. She had never known any other. In a certain sense, she loved them all—loved even Coridon, who so haplessly sued for her hand—she wished him well; she wished them all well—she was grateful for their thousand kindnesses. Those dear old people, father and mother as she believed them, she would have shed her heart's blood for them. And yet, within that maiden's breast, was a spring of emotion which had not been touched. *The music of the soul goes out only to the touch of a kindred harmony.* 'Twas not that Pastorel despised the rustic garb or humble lot of her companions. Within her was a sense of the beautiful which found in them no correlative. Love is based upon admiration; it is a kind of idolatry; and there was in them nothing which she could idolize. Yet, she was not discontented and fretful at her condition. She had known nothing in human character superior to what

was around her, and probably was not conscious to herself of possessing, as she did, the capability of an emotion, exquisite as the rose in the sunbeam, yet delicate as the lily of the valley. The Chemists will prepare you a compound, a sort of invisible ink, colourless at first, and giving to the casual beholder no evidences of the letters which with it you have traced upon the virgin paper. But once expose that paper to the heat or the light, and every mark and line becomes at once visible. *Man knows not himself, till circumstances and occasions have brought out his latent capabilities and emotions.* Pastorel was contented, for she was not conscious of the want which really existed within her bosom. She knew not the idolatrous admiration which could be excited in her mind, for the qualities calculated to call forth that admiration, had never been presented to her—she knew not the ecstasy to which she could be raised, for no idol had yet been placed before the altar of her affections. It was not till the arrival of the gentle stranger, and the knowledge of his noble and gracious qualities, that she knew herself.

Pastorel, if I am correct in my analysis, is certainly a beautiful idea. The reader of the poem will find nothing more exquisite among all the creations of Spenser. He will find also the story itself full of romance. But this Essay has already been carried beyond the bounds of discretion, and I hasten to bring it to a close.

There is however one scene, towards the close of the sixth Book, which it would be treason to the character of Spenser not to quote. It will be recollected, that Spenser in his Pastorals designates himself as a



rustic piper, Colin Clout. Among the closing scenes of the Fairy Queen, Colin once more appears. The woman whom he married, the Elizabeth of the sonnets and the Epithalamium, is here celebrated as a country lass. The stanzas about to be quoted, were probably composed during the same happy period that marks the composition of the Epithalamium.

Calidore, while abiding among the Shepherds, met with the incident which I am about to quote.

One day, as he did range the fields abroad,  
 Whilst his fair Pastorella was elsewhere,  
 He chanced to come, far from all people's tread,  
 Unto a place, whose pleasance did appear  
 To pass all others on the earth which were :  
 For all that ever was by Nature's skill  
 Devised to work delight was gathered there ;  
 And there by her were pouréd forth at fill,  
 As if, this to adorn, she all the rest did pill.

It was an Hill placed in an open plain,  
 That round about was bordered with a wood  
 Of matchless height, that seemed th' earth to disdain ;  
 In which all trees of honour stately stood,  
 And did all winter as in summer bud,  
 Spreading pavilions for the birds to bower,  
 Which in their lower branches sung aloud ;  
 And in their tops the soaring hawk did tower,  
 Sitting like king of fowls in majesty and power :

And at the foot thereof a gentle flood  
 His silver waves did softly tumble down,  
 Unmarred with ragged moss or filthy mud ;  
 Ne mote wild beasts, ne mote the ruder clown,  
 Thereto approach ; ne filth mote therein drown :  
 But Nymphs and Fairies by the banks did sit  
 In the wood's shade which did the waters crown,  
 Keeping all noisome things away from it,  
 And to the waters' fall tuning their accents fit.

And on the top thereof a spacious plain  
Did spread itself, to serve to all delight,  
Either to dance, when they to dance would fain,  
Or else to course about their bases light;  
Ne ought there wanted, which for pleasure might  
Desiréd be, or thence to banish bale:  
So pleasantly the Hill with equal height  
Did seem to overlook the lowly vale;  
Therefore it rightly clepéd was Mount Acidale.

Unto this place whenas the Elfin Knight  
Approached, him seeméd that the merry sound  
Of a shrill pipe he playing heard on hight,  
And many feet fast thumping th' hollow ground,  
That through the woods their echo did rebound.  
He nigher drew, to weet what mote it be:  
There he a troupe of Ladies dancing found  
Full merrily, and making gladful glee,  
And in the midst a Shepherd piping he did see.

He durst not enter into th' open green,  
For dread of them unwares to be descried,  
For breaking of their dance, if he were seen;  
But in the covert of the wood did hide,  
Beholding all, yet of them unespied:  
There he did see, that pleaséd much his sight,  
That even he himself his eyes envied,  
An hundred naked Maidens lily white,  
All rangéd in a ring and dancing in delight.

All they without were ranged in a ring,  
And dancéd round; but in the midst of them  
Three other Ladies did both dance and sing,  
The whilst the rest them roundabout did hem,  
And like a garland did in compass stem:  
And in the midst of those same three was placed  
Another Damsel, as a precious gem  
Amidst a ring most richly well enchased,  
That with her goodly presence all the rest much graced.

Such was the beauty of this goodly band,  
Whose sundry parts were here too long to tell :  
But she, that in the midst of them did stand,  
Seemed all the rest in beauty to excel,  
Crowned with a rosy garland that right well  
Did her beseem : and ever, as the crew  
About her danced, sweet flowers that far did smell,  
And fragrant odours they upon her threw ;  
But, most of all, those Three did her with gifts endue.

Those were the Graces, daughters of delight,  
Handmaids of Venus, which are wont to haunt  
Upon this Hill, and dance there day and night :  
Those Three to men all gifts of grace do grant ;  
And all, that Venus in herself doth vaunt,  
Is borrowéd of them : but that fair one,  
That in the midst was placéd paravaunt,  
Was she to whom that Shepherd pipéd alone ;  
That made him pipe so merrily, as never none.

She was, to weet, that jolly Shepherd's Lass,  
Which pipéd there unto that merry rout ;  
That jolly Shepherd, which there pipéd, was  
Poor Colin Clout (who knows not Colin Clout ?)  
He pipéd apace, whilst they him danced about.  
Pipe, jolly Shepherd, pipe thou now apace  
Unto thy Love that made thee low to lout ;  
Thy Love is present there with thee in place ;  
Thy Love is there advanced to be another Grace.

Much wondered Calidore at this strange sight,  
Whose like before his eye had never seen ;  
And standing long astonishéd in sprite,  
And rapt with pleasance, wist not what to ween ;  
Whether it were the train of Beauty's Queen,  
Or Nymphs, or Fairies, or enchanted show,  
With which his eyes mote have deluded been.  
Therefore, resolving what it was to know,  
Out of the wood he rose, and toward them did go.

But, soon as he appeared to their view,  
 They vanished all away out of his sight,  
 And clean were gone, which way he never knew;  
 All save the Shepherd, who, for fell despite  
 Of that displeasure, broke his bag-pipe quite,  
 And made great moan for that unhappy turn:  
 But Calidore, though no less sorry wight  
 For that mishap, yet seeing him to mourn,  
 Drew near, that he the truth of all by him mote learn.

Calidore approaches the Shepherd and apologizes for the interruption which had caused this beautiful vision to disappear, and asks an explanation. Colin explains the three to be the three Graces, in which there is nothing special. It is to the explanation of the last to which attention is called.

“But that fourth Maid, which there amidst them traced,  
 Who can aread what creature mote she be,  
 Whether a creature, or a goddess graced  
 With heavenly gifts from heaven first enraced!\*

But whoso sure she was, she worthy was  
 To be the Fourth with those Three other placed:  
 Yet was she certes but a country lass;  
 Yet she all other country lasses far did pass:

“So far, as doth the Daughter of the Day  
 All other lesser lights in light excel;  
 So far doth she in beautiful array  
 Above all other lasses bear the bell;  
 No less in virtue, that beseems her well,  
 Doth she exceed the rest of all her race;  
 For which the Graces, that hère wont to dwell,<sup>1</sup>  
 Have for more honour brought her to this place,  
 And graced her so much to be another Grace.

“Another Grace she well deserves to be,  
 In whom so many graces gathered are,

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\* *Enraced* (Fr. *enraciner*, *enracer*), enrooted, implanted.



Excelling much the mean of her degree;  
Divine resemblance, beauty sovereign rare,  
Firm chastity, that spite ne blemish dare,  
All which she with such courtesy doth grace,  
That all her peers cannot with her compare,  
But quite are dimméd when she is in place:  
She made me often pipe, and now to pipe apace.

“Sun of the world,\* great glory of the sky,  
That all the earth dost lighten with thy rays,  
Great Gloriana, greatest Majesty!  
Pardon thy Shepherd, mongst so many lays  
As he hath sung of Thee in all his days,  
To make one minim of thy poor Handmaid,  
And underneath thy feet to place her praise;  
That, when thy glory shall be far displayed  
To future age, of her this mention may be made!”

Milton has given to his blindness a perpetuity of fame coeval with his *Paradise Lost*. Spenser couples with his last and greatest work, and his most beautiful series of delineations, this touching and noble tribute of affection to his WIFE. It seems to be a sort of dying request that posterity would never read his *Fairy Queen* without thinking of his Elizabeth—that his wife might become an integral portion of that immortality of which he was already conscious. Thus does the character of the Man shine conspicuous above that even of the Poet. I need not say, I admire, I reverence him, in both capacities.

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It seems but meet, before bringing this Exposition to a close, to give some general expression of opinion

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\* *Sun of the world*, Queen Elizabeth.

in regard to the writings upon which I have been commenting. I have, however, given in this Essay so much of Spenser himself, that it will be a work of supererogation to occupy much space with mere opinions about him. It is like describing the personal appearance of a man whom we have seen. The readers, if there be any such, who have followed the exposition to the present point, are in some good degree conversant with Spenser's great work. They have, not the opinion of this or the other critic in regard to him, but what is of infinitely more value, the materials for forming a judgment of their own. I will add, I believe they know really more of this incomparable author than nine-tenths of the reading community, either in England or America.

This very fact would seem of itself to suggest some expression of surprise. Why is it that a poem, containing so much and such exquisite beauty, so much and such delicious entertainment, so pregnant with grave and serious meaning, so overflowing with goodness, so musical in its numbers, so essentially poetical, should be so little read?

On this single point, I will venture in conclusion to offer one or two observations.

In the first place, I do not attribute the prevalent distaste for the Fairy Queen to the allegory. The mere fact of the poem's being allegorical, need not of itself make it unattractive. No better evidence of this could be desired than the unbounded popularity of *Pilgrim's Progress*. In the work of Spenser, as in that of Bunyan, there is no lack of hidden meaning. But either of these works may be read as a romantic tale without reference to the meaning. The heroes

and heroines, though personifications of virtues and vices, are not mere mental abstractions, but living, acting, sentient beings, of like passions and affections as ourselves. In our mind's eye, we have seen Talus, and Artegal, and the Giant with the Scales, and Britomart, and the Merry Mariner, just as palpably and distinctly as we ever saw Ellen Douglass, or Rob Roy, or Jeanie Deans. I know it is a common fault with the writers of allegory, in tracing out obscure and artificial analogies, to forget to make real men and women. And because it is a common fault, and because there is obviously some great fault in Spenser, it has been, I think without sufficient consideration, taken for granted that this is *his* fault; and it has been assumed, that the reason why he is not more read, is that the allegory has made him necessarily artificial, abstract, and dry. On the contrary, so far as my reading goes, no writer of allegory, not even the "Prince of Dreamers," surpasses Spenser in the power of giving "to airy nothing a local habitation and a name,"—of changing at will the merest abstractions of the intellect into concrete and palpable realities—of transforming, as by the wand of his own Merlin, the veriest deductions of Logic into brawn and bone, living men and women.

Nor do I believe the reason why Spenser is little read, is that the incidents which he relates are remote from common life and our own experience. No reader of *Ivanhoe* can suppose the pageantry of a tournament or the adventures of chivalry, subjects incapable of a lively popular effect. On the contrary, those gay and brilliant illusions of the middle ages have in them something peculiarly fascinating to the imagination.

They have come, by common consent, to be regarded as among the most pleasing subjects for romantic fiction.

Nor do I attribute Spenser's want of success in any great degree to want of skill in the invention of his plots. There are indeed faults in the minor details of his plots. He is exceedingly careless in this respect. For instance, while Sir Satyrane in the third Book is fighting with Arganté, the ugly creature ran away to the Witch's hut with Florimel's girdle—and yet, we are afterwards told, Sir Satyrane had the girdle and held the tournament for it. Again, Florimel is represented as leaving Court in search of Marinel, who had been slain upon the sea-shore, and yet Florimel was seen fleeing from the forester before the encounter of Britomart with Marinel, in which the latter was slain. Innumerable instances of this kind occur, in which the author in one part of his story forgets the arrangements which he has made in some other part. These, however, are mere faults of detail, which might have been corrected on a revision of the whole, and which were probably the result of mere carelessness and haste. They do not invalidate my main position, which is, that in constructing a story, Spenser had a good degree of skill in making his plot or groundwork. He proceeds from a single and apparently isolated fact to interweave others, interlaces scene with scene, and incident with incident, contrives to pass abruptly to another part of the story just at the most provoking time, just as the hero or heroine is on the verge of deliverance, or destruction, and the hearer is agape to know which;—all of these, and many more he can do, according to the most approved plan of the art.



No one, I am certain, can fairly analyze the plot of any one Book, and not regard it as one well planned, and capable of the highest interest.

And yet Spenser is not a good story-teller. Most persons who fail in the art of story-telling, do so from the want of imagination. They do not call a distant or past scene to mind, with that liveliness of apprehension which enables them to set it vividly before their hearers. Their own conceptions want freshness and distinctness, and consequently the narrative becomes heavy and dull. Spenser, as a story-teller, fails for the opposite reason. He has, if it be possible, too much imagination. I hesitate not to regard him as the most imaginative of all English writers. Every page in the *Fairy Queen* is a picture. The poem is a continued series of tableaux, almost as distinct and clear to the imagination of the reader after a perusal, as are the scenes of the theatre to the spectator after a performance. Nothing indeed can surpass the facility with which the author conjures up these scenes of enchantment. He must have possessed in an extraordinary degree that faculty of the mind which metaphysicians term *Conception*—the power on which imagination mainly depends. His descriptions are pictures. The reader sees what is described, because the writer saw it.

Now, to have such a lively apprehension of the past and the distant, to be thus intimately and essentially present to what is not here, the mind must necessarily abstract itself from what is here. Such a high degree of the power of *conception* and imagination, implies by necessity a power and a habit of abstraction—not abstraction as the word is used in logic, but in the

sense of absence of mind. The mind cannot be thus intimately present at two places at once. When Spenser saw the Lion approach Lady Una, or entered the skiff with the old fisherman and Florimel, I do not believe he knew whether it was winter or summer, whether it rained or shined, at Kilcolman Castle. Of all poets he seems to come most fully up to Shakspeare's description—"of imagination all compact." Now, as it was said before, this very ease, this perfect entireness with which he enters into the scene in hand, detracts from his skill as a story-teller. He enters so fully into the present scene, that he forgets the one just past, or just to come. The story-teller should be to some extent like the showman. To pull successfully the wires, he should stand apart, behind the scenes. He should not enter so fully into the scene himself, as to forget that the spectators are dependent upon his providence and forecast, and that he must all the while have one eye upon the scene and one eye upon them.

The writer, no less than the speaker, must study his audience quite as much as his subject. To be so enwrapped in the subject as to forget the audience, is to reckon without your host. Spenser is so absorbed with what is immediately in hand, his imagination is so completely engrossed with the present object, that the wants of the reader are forgotten. The reader is precipitated from one scene to another without any sufficient warning or preparation. He consequently gets bewildered. The outlines of the story are not sketched with that bold, strong hand which would keep the reader constantly informed of his own movements. The author does not stop often enough to

“define his position.” He does not mark clearly and boldly his transitions from one subject or scene to another. The consequence is inevitable. The reader perpetually loses the thread of the story. He sees clearly enough each particular scene, but he loses its connexion with the rest. The writer of a narrative who allows his reader thus to lose the thread of connexion—who does not invent some contrivances for keeping his reader constantly “posted up,” to use a mercantile phrase, with the progress of the main action,—such a writer, I say, is never a good storyteller. The man who is successful as a narrator, while busy with one particular part, never for one moment loses sight of all the other parts, no matter how numerous, distant, or complicated they may be. Hence the difficulty with Spenser. He enters upon the action in hand with his whole force. He keeps no corps in reserve to watch the movements in other parts of the field. Now this very fault, this surrendering himself up so entirely to the present scene, and neglecting to carry forward *pari passu*, in the mind of the reader, the main action of the poem, arises, I maintain, from the author’s excessive facility in the power of imagination. *He does not tell his story well, because he has too much imagination.* On the other hand, this very cause of his not succeeding as a narrator, has contributed mainly to his unparalleled success in describing single scenes. As a mere scene painter, he stands unsurpassed, I had almost said unapproached, in ancient or modern times.

The main reason, then, why Spenser is so little read, is believed to be his want of skill as a narrator. As the poem is of the narrative kind, failure in such a

point must of course be a serious defect. It has been a leading object in this Essay to do something in a very humble way towards supplying to the reader this desideratum—to fill out the connexions—to mark strongly the transitions—to carry forward the different parts of the story, and to keep them all the time fresh in the mind. The Essay has aimed, in other words, to give a series of connected and agreeable readings in the Fairy Queen, and to give them in such a way as should lead at the same time to a more intelligent perusal of the poem itself.

There are other causes which have contributed to the unpopularity of Spenser, although I believe I have mentioned the main one. Among these secondary causes, very obvious ones are the *obsolete words*, and the *antique spelling*. The spelling might be modernized, except where the rhyme or the rhythm interferes. In the quotations which have been given, the language has been thus modernized, the words being spelt, as far as practicable, according to the modern usage. This is precisely what has been done in regard to Shakspeare and the English Bible. By this means the number of really obsolete words is very much reduced. The difficulty attending a perusal is still farther reduced, or rather is entirely removed, by giving at the bottom of each page brief explanations of the obsolete words.

Spenser has faults of style, many, serious, and obvious. He never hesitates to use awkward and cumbersome inversions and circumlocutions, in order to make out a rhyme. He often for the same purpose changes both the spelling and pronunciation of a word, without rule or analogy, and sometimes two or three times on the same page. He is careless in his state-



ments, one part of a story often disagreeing with another. He describes the most disgusting objects with the same minuteness with which he describes those that are pleasing and beautiful. He sometimes offends against delicacy. At the same time he is eminently pure in heart—"an Israelite, indeed, in whom there is no guile." His fertility is perfectly amazing. He is not dramatic like Shakspeare, nor passionate like Byron, but he is eminently, and above all other writers, imaginative. His descriptions are paintings. And yet it is remarkable, that in describing his Knights and Ladies, he never tells you the size, shape, or form of particular features. It seems indeed as if we could at a glance distinguish Britomart, or Florimel, or Belphebe, or Amoret, or Una, Saint George, Sir Guyon, Artegall, or Calidore, the Palmer, Talus, Timias, or Arthur:—that we could in an instant single out any one of these from a thousand:—and yet, when we come to analyze the idea which we have of these persons, and examine Spenser's descriptions, we will find that almost the only particular, of a personal and visible kind, on which we can fix, is that the author gives all his women yellow hair! The colour of the eye, the cut of the nose, the pout of the lip, the longitude of the neck, the contour, the bust, the hand, the foot, are never so much as once mentioned. We recognise, indeed, the distinguished individuals who have been named, but it is after all mainly by their moral qualities. All else is in truth, "mere leather and prunella," and may be safely left to the taste and fancy of the reader.

Milton calls the author of the *Fairy Queen* "the sage and serious Spenser." Like all of Milton's

epithets, it contains a meaning. The Fairy Queen is most truly a book of instruction. It is not a mere tale to work upon the feelings without any ulterior or higher design. On the contrary, it has the distinct aim to set forth lofty and ennobling truths; to fortify the mind with virtuous principles; to mould and fashion the pattern of a "perfect gentleman," which, in the author's ideal, is synonymous with a "perfect Christian."

No poem in our language better rewards study. Every character, every incident, is full of meaning. In the very imperfect sketches which have been given in the present volume, I have attempted to put into the hands of the reader the key to a small part of this meaning. Most of the characters have not only a general interpretation, suiting all times, but have also a special historical interpretation. They meant Elizabeth, and Philip, and Sidney, and Cecil, and Raleigh; they mean, also, the men and women of Chestnut street and Broadway: they mean, gentle reader, you and me: they mean human nature through its whole range, from its loftiest to its lowest manifestations, from its brightest to its blackest aspect.

The Fairy Queen is read chiefly by two classes of persons. The young find entertainment in its tales of wonder, its scenes of enchantment, its dazzling and gorgeous dreams of chivalry. But the season of wonder passes away. Stern and hard realities press upon us, as we enter the arena of active life. The contest is a part of our moral education. Widely different is its effect upon different persons. After battling it with the world for a period of twenty years, or until the

character has become fixed and rigid, some emerge from the struggle, hard, selfish, and unbelieving. Such persons regard with a cold eye the warm dream of their youth. But, depend upon it, the man who at forty finds his heart opening with fresh delight to the sober and passionless reveries of Spenser, has not passed through the ordeal of life entirely in vain.

THE END.

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